

Meeting urges efforts for food security

AMMAN (Petra) — A conference on pan-Arab food security and investment concluded in Amman Tuesday with a call on Arab leaders to unify ranks and combine efforts to meet the economic, agricultural and industrial needs of the Arab World. In an appeal sent to Arab heads of state, the participants said agricultural production of the Arab World was below the required levels. They said Arab countries import \$30 billion worth of food supplies from foreign countries, warning that in the future Arabs might not find enough suppliers of their food needs. They appealed to all concerned Arab authorities to offer support to all agricultural and industrial projects to be able to compete with other world countries and economic blocs and to meet the needs of Arab nation. The participants also urged Arab leaders to establish an Arab economic bloc to be able to benefit in the best manner of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and to reduce its negative impact on Arab countries.

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Peres says Israel ready, urges Assad to move towards peace

Israeli premier, in speech to U.S. Congress, vows not to let peace-making be secondary to internal politics

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres made a heartfelt appeal to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad Tuesday to seize the "historic opportunity" before them and make peace a reality in the Middle East.

Mr. Peres, speaking at a joint session of Congress, used the podium offered by the legislature to address Mr. Assad directly and urge him to help ensure that a global peace is restored to the Middle East before the turn of the century.

"Without forgetting the past, let us not look back," Mr. Peres said to Mr. Assad.

"Let (our) fingertips touch a new untested hope. Let each party yield to the other, each giving consideration to the respected needs of the other, mutually so, he to us, we to him."

"Without illusion, but with resolve, we shall stand ready

to make demanding decisions, if you are, if Assad is," he said as thunderous applause erupted from the chamber.

Israel is prepared to "negotiate relentlessly," Mr. Peres said, "if Assad is."

"I believe we face an historic opportunity, perhaps of a galloping nature," he added.

The appeal marked an attempt by Mr. Peres to build on the openness Mr. Assad displayed the previous day during a telephone conversation with U.S. President Bill Clinton at the White House.

Mr. Clinton said Mr. Assad had pledged to "do his best" to reach a settlement and agreed to meet with Secretary of State Warren Christopher later this week to discuss new proposals from the Israeli side on breaking the deadlock.

Syria gave a cautious welcome to Mr. Peres' vow to proceed "full speed ahead"

to resolve differences with Damascus.

But a senior Syrian official gave no indication Damascus would relent over its demand to see a full withdrawal by Israel from the Golan.

"The words of Peres about moving the peace process forward are welcome but we need to see if there is anything new regarding full withdrawal from the Golan," said the official.

"The Israeli premier should go into details and not limit his statements to generalities. He should specify that peace with Syria could not be achieved without a total pull back from the Golan Heights," he added.

The official said talk about any breakthrough in the negotiations between Syria and Israel could not be made before Mr. Christopher's tour of the region starting on Thursday.

"It depends on what ideas Christopher would bring with

him and whether these ideas are new and could remove the obstacles which were blocking the negotiations so far," he said.

Talks between Syria and Israel broke down in June over disagreements on security arrangements that would follow an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Israel wants to operate early-warning radar stations there, a demand Syria has steadfastly refused.

Israeli state radio said Mr. Peres proposed to Mr. Clinton setting up joint Israeli-Syrian working groups that would negotiate not only the future of the Golan Heights but also water-sharing arrangements, economic relations, military issues, Lebanon, and broader Middle East peace questions.

State-run Damascus Radio said:

"Hopes have been revived

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Jordan's offer to host Iraqi opposition conference is prompted by obstinacy of regime in Baghdad, senior official says

Source reveals attempt by King to convince Saddam of the pressing need to lift sanctions after Kamel's defection

President Saddam following the Aug. 8 defection to Jordan of Iraqi military weapons' expert and President Saddam's son-in-law, General Hussein Kamel, to which Jordan got a negative response, according to the official, who requested anonymity.

In the letter, whose contents have hitherto not been revealed, "the King strongly advised the Iraqi president to take concrete measures towards meeting the conditions of the U.N. Security Council and lifting the crippling sanctions which is the only way

to alleviate for the suffering of Iraqis, and the Iraqi leader's disinclination to join the region's peace march prompted King Hussein to call for political change in Iraq."

According to the official, the letter to President Saddam was delivered by Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem, who travelled to Baghdad shortly after the Aug. 8 defection to Jordan of Gen. Kamel.

That trip by Mr. Qasem

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Papandreou said 'stable'

ATHENS (Agencies) — Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou was reported to be in a "stable" condition on Tuesday after kidney and respiratory problems were compounded by an infection and orientation trouble.

A medical bulletin from doctors treating the 76-year-old statesman said he was taken off a respiratory machine "after a lowering in his temperature" from a fever which developed Monday.

However, he was still undergoing kidney dialysis to purify his blood and also antibiotic treatment to help him fight off an infection.

Checks to determine the causes of that infection "are good and do not show any problem," the bulletin added.

Mr. Papandreou was admitted to the Onassis cardiology centre with pneumonia more than three weeks ago.

Earlier this month he was fitted with the feeding tube to curb weight loss. He has lost more than 10 kilograms since his admission on Nov. 20.

Meanwhile the pro-government daily *Ta Nea* reported for the first time that Mr. Papandreou was suffering from "confusion and orientation trouble" and could not recognise some of his doctors.

Mr. Papandreou's worsening health was expected to intensify calls for a successor to be chosen in his PASOK socialist party.

PASOK's policy-making executive bureau met on Monday night and discussed his possible successor.

Party sources said if Mr.

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Palestinians raise flag over Israel-free Nablus

NABLUS (Agencies) — Palestinian police raised the flag over the former Israeli military headquarters in the West Bank town of Nablus on Tuesday while thousands celebrated the end of 28 years of occupation.

People jammed the streets, singing and dancing, happy that Israel had pulled out on Monday night, 48 hours earlier than expected to lessen the chance of confrontations with Palestinians.

The town of 130,000 is the biggest of six due to be handed over his month under a peace deal signed in September in Washington between Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime

Minister Yitzhak Rabin who was assassinated by a few last month.

"I am very happy for the liberation of Nablus and because what we had agreed upon is being implemented faithfully," Mr. Arafat told reporters in the self-rule area of Gaza.

Thousands cheered as Palestinian police raised the flag over the former Israeli military headquarters accompanied by the Palestinian national anthem (see page 2).

"This is a historic moment in our lives. We can't believe the Israelis are actually out of our lives," said 23-year-old Majed Al Masri.

Palestinians were happily shocked when earlier they

saw the last of five Israeli army jeeps leave military headquarters.

The Israeli military governor called us and said they wanted to leave Nablus at 11:00 p.m., but they escaped earlier because they were afraid there would be bloody clashes with the people," said a senior PLO official.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA), caught by surprise, had yet to bring in PLO police to take over. City fathers improvised, deploying municipal police to maintain order.

Hours later hundreds of Palestinian policemen arrived, waving their M16s

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Juppe vows to pursue reform as workers put up show of strength

PARIS (Agencies) — Prime Minister Alain Juppe, defying mass street demonstrations and a 19-day-old public transport strike, vowed on Tuesday that his disputed reform of France's indebted welfare system would go ahead.

"This reform will come into effect, gradually and with consultation," Mr. Juppe told parliament. "There is no serious alternative to the reform I proposed."

The conservative premier, replying to a left-wing opposition no-confidence motion, said the first two decrees creating a new tax to pay off the social security fund's debts and reforming the organisation of health care would take effect in January.

Other decrees reforming hospitals, regionalising health services and giving parliament a say in the annual welfare budget would come into effect over the following four months.

In an effort to conciliate trade unions demanding the withdrawal of the plan, Mr. Juppe said the role of the "social partners" — unions and employers — who currently manage the social security system would be guaranteed in the future.

He also confirmed to parliament concessions he made to the unions on Monday, including the shelving of a disputed state contract to overhaul France's loss-making railways and the holding of a "social summit" in the near future on unem-

ployment.

Earlier Tuesday, more than a million French workers downed tools and staged protest rallies across the country, threatening the survival of Mr. Juppe in spite of the concessions he made.

After Mr. Juppe announced a climbdown Monday, two out of the three main French unions vowed Tuesday to continue to fight his plans to reform the country's generous and heavily indebted welfare system and health service.

As record crowds demonstrated in several French cities in the sixth national day of protest since the strike movement began on Nov. 24, Louis Vianet, head of the

(Continued on page 7)

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U.N. is concerned over big military buildup in Cyprus

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Secretary-General Boutros Ghali expressed renewed concern on Monday at the "excessive levels of military forces and armaments" in Cyprus and the rate at which they were being strengthened.

"Neither side has heeded the Security Council's repeated calls for a significant reduction in the number of foreign troops and in defence spending in Cyprus," he said.

"It has also not been possible to make progress even on modest measures, repeatedly called for by the council, aimed at reducing confrontation between the two sides along the cease fire lines," he added.

The U.N. chief's comments were part of a report recommending a further six-month renewal, until June 30, 1996, of the mandate of the U.N. peacekeeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), comprising 1,150 troops and 34 civilian police.

The force, which includes soldiers from Argentina, Austria, Britain, Canada, Finland, Hungary and Ireland, and police from Australia and Ireland, has been stationed on the island since 1964 to help keep peace between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities.

Cyprus has been virtually partitioned since 1974, when Turkish troops landed in the north of the island in reaction to a short-lived coup in Nicosia engineered by the military junta then ruling Greece. In 1983 the Turkish Cypriots proclaimed their own state,

recognised only by Ankara. U.N. efforts to reunite the island under a federal system have continued for years, without success.

In brief reference to this, Dr. Ghali said almost all elements needed for a just and lasting settlement were on the table and he hoped that "in the next few months it will be possible to generate the necessary political will to overcome the long-standing deadlock in the negotiating process."

Giving details of the military build-up on both sides, he said that, with the arrival of an additional 14 tanks, the Turkish forces now had approximately 265 M-48A5 tanks.

"There was a significant increase in the number of armoured personnel carriers a continued upgrading of artillery from 105 mm to 155 mm a significant enhancement in their air defence capability with the arrival of shoulder-launched missiles and guns and a significant increase in their battlefield surveillance capability."

This represented a significant increase in the military capability of the Turkish forces in Cyprus, he said, adding: "In terms of the ratio of military personnel to inhabitants, with over 30,000 Turkish troops and 4,500 Turkish Cypriot troops, the northern part of the island remains one of the most densely militarised areas in the world."

The secretary-general said the National Guard in the south, "though weaker by far

than the Turkish forces in Cyprus, has continued its comprehensive upgrading programme."

An 18 additional BMP 3 infantry fighting vehicles had been delivered and the National Guard had increased its holdings of AMX-30 tanks to 104, with the acquisition of 56 such tanks currently being overhauled in Greece.

"In addition, 224 of the first year's target of 500 volunteers from Greece for service with the national guard have arrived in Cyprus," he said, while Greek naval and air force units took part in a recent annual guard exercise.

Dr. Ghali said a humanitarian review by UNFICYP showed that "the Greek Cypriots and Maronites in the northern part of the island are far from leading the normal life they were promised," under a 1975 agreement between the two sides.

The limited measures that the Turkish Cypriot authorities have recently announced with a view to improving the daily lives of the persons concerned are welcome. At the same time, the measures highlight how much more needs to be done."

UNFICYP would pursue this matter with the Turkish Cypriot authorities and "also follow up with the government of Cyprus on the measures it is taking to eliminate any discrimination against or harassment of the Turkish Cypriots living in the southern part of the island."

The secretary-general said the National Guard in the south, "though weaker by far



OFF TO SCHOOL: An Egyptian father packs five children on his motorcycle to transport them to school in Cairo. Whole families can often be seen riding motorcycles in the congested streets of Cairo, which as a population of 15 million and where cars are very expensive (AFP photo)

Nablus rejoices, recalls bitter memory of Israeli occupation

NABLUS (AFP) — With automatic weapons fire, tambourines, horns, singing and fireworks, thousands of Palestinians celebrated into the early morning Tuesday the end of Israel's 28-year occupation of this largest West Bank town.

"I think I'm going to walk all night. To walk alone, with my family, when I want, where I want, it was my dream," said Ahmad Mohammad.

He was out in his pyjamas, bathrobe and house slippers when the early withdrawal of Israeli troops from this town of 130,000 residents began, which surprised many other Palestinians already in bed.

A joyous crowd of men, women, children and Palestinian police pressed around the large three-storey, white-stone building that was the Israeli army's former headquarters in Nablus.

Residents continued to circle the building despite the biting cold and drizzling rain, as several took shelter under the awnings of nearby stores.

Next to the former Israeli military headquarters, the now empty prison was visited and revisited throughout the

night, especially by former Palestinian prisoners and their families.

Khaled Mahmoud Abdul-ai, 41, pulled on the bell that had announced the end of the prisoners' family visits. He came with his two daughters and son. Mr. Abdulai served a seven-year prison sentence for anti-Israeli attacks and said he came back "to remember and express his his."

The Palestinian colours of black, red, white and black flew in the wind throughout the town, known for its "rock wars" led by young Palestinians against their occupiers.

In haste, the merchants of Nablus put up banners welcoming the Palestinian police and celebrating the glory of Palestine Liberation Organisation leader Yasser Arafat.

"Our banners are not very pretty, but we were caught by surprise because the army left two days early," said Jamal Ramzi.

The Israeli soldiers left Nablus late Monday, 48 hours before their scheduled withdrawal as part of an accord to extend Palestinian autonomy across the West Bank.

went orderly," said General Mohammad Al Amieh, the man now in charge of the building.

After the transfer of power was complete, the Palestinian police wanted to burn the Israeli flag, but the rain prevented them. They instead tore it up and threw down the shreds to the cheering crowd, who seized them as precious trophies.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Half of Mideast gets unfit drinking water

BEIRUT (AFP) — Almost half of the population of the Middle East live off water that has not been treated properly, a representative of the World Health Organisation (WHO) told a regional conference here on Monday. Abdul Hai Meshbal was addressing representatives from 21 countries gathered in the Lebanese capital for a conference on "Water, Sanitation and Supply." The conference, running until Friday, aims to draw up long-term strategies to increase water resources and to lay down guidelines for regional cooperation. "By the end of 1994, around 71 per cent of the population in the region received drinking water but only about 55 per cent were getting properly purified water," Mr. Meshbal said. "This means that 122 million people in the region have no access to purified water while 190 million are deprived of water purification stations," he said. Lebanon's representative, Bassam Jaber, warned that his country's reputation for rich water resources would be redundant in 1995. It would be forced to seek alternative sources. The states participating are: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Cyprus, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Iran rejects as 'baseless' German probe

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Tuesday rejected as "baseless" a murder probe against Information Minister Ali Fallahian by German federal prosecutors. Germany said the investigation concerned Mr. Fallahian's alleged role in the September 1992 murder of four Iranian Kurdish opposition activists in Berlin. However, an Information Ministry official on Tuesday told the Tehran Times: "The Iranian people and government will not forgive baseless accusations levelled against Iranian officials." Germany is Iran's biggest trading partner, and has been visited by Mr. Fallahian and Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati in the past two years. The Tehran Times article was the first comment on the charges from Iran, which has yet to issue any formal reaction. "The baseless accusation is a result of attempts made by international Zionism to disturb Iranian-German relations," the paper said. "These attempts are the continuation of tumults created by some Bundestag members last month." The German parliament on Nov. 10 adopted a motion calling on the government to cancel a visit by Mr. Velayati after President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani welcomed the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Mr. Velayati was to have attended a conference on Islam and Europe, but the Bonn government cancelled the gathering after the Bundestag vote.

Amateur took picture of Rabin killing

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli amateur photographer captured the assassination last month of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on film, state radio reported Tuesday. The man, whose identity was not given, handed his film to a three-judge commission set up to carry out an investigation into the shooting of Mr. Rabin by a Jewish extremist. The man reportedly took the photographs from the roof of a department store located next to the Tel Aviv square where Mr. Rabin had attended a giant peace rally just before he was shot. The security forces charged with protecting Mr. Rabin came under intense criticism for failing to prevent right-wing nationalist Yigal Amir from shooting the prime minister at point-blank range as he left the rally. Ballistics experts quoted by the radio said the photographer's presence on the nearby rooftop showed that someone armed with a rifle and telescopic sight also could have shot Mr. Rabin with relative ease. To date, no pictures of the actual shooting of Mr. Rabin have been published, although video images taken shortly before and after the killing have been broadcast.

Egypt: Muslim states seek Bosnia peace role

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's Foreign Minister Amr Musa said on Tuesday Muslim countries supported the peace deal on Bosnia to be signed in Paris on Thursday and that they will ask to participate in the NATO-led peacekeeping mission. Mr. Musa told reporters before leaving for Paris that Muslim countries would continue to support the U.S.-brokered agreement since it was initialised and accepted by the Bosnian government. He said a contact group formed by Islamic countries on Bosnia will hold a meeting in Paris and will later meet the U.S.-led international contact group to decide how they could take part in the peace mission. Mr. Musa said each Islamic country would be responsible for financing the troops it was willing to deploy in Bosnia. The contact group includes officials from Morocco, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Senegal, Egypt and Malaysia.

Syrian airlines to fly Larnaca-Madrid route

NICOSIA (AFP) — Syrian Arab Airlines is to start a weekly Larnaca-Madrid service under an agreement with Cyprus Airways, the Cypriot national carrier said Monday. A Boeing 727 with a capacity of 165 seats will be used, it said, without giving a date for the start of the service, aimed at developing "a new tourist market."

Security Council okays Japan's role in Golan

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The U.N. Security Council on Monday authorised Japanese troops to join a U.N. force on the Golan Heights. The Security Council agreed to a proposal from U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali to add Japan to the list of nations supplying troops to the force, the U.N. said in a statement. More than 1,000 U.N. troops police the separation of Israeli and Syrian forces on Golan Heights, 458 from Austria, 214 from Canada and 354 from Poland. Reports from Tokyo suggest that Japan would send at least 100 soldiers to replace the Canadian contingent in February.

U.S. says it wants fair vote in Sahara

RABAT (R) — Washington would like to see a free and fair referendum in the Western Sahara to resolve the outstanding dispute between Morocco and the Algerian-backed Polisario Front, a U.S. official said on Monday.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau, who is on a two-day visit to Morocco and was due to travel to Tunisia on Tuesday, also did not rule out a visit to Algeria "in the next few months, or weeks."

Mr. Pelletreau met King Hassan on Monday for talks he said covered the latest developments in the Middle East, economic relations, the Western Sahara, Algeria and Bosnia.

"We would like to see a free, fair and impartial referendum in Western Sahara to determine the preference of the people of the region," Mr. Pelletreau told a news conference.

He was asked if Washington would back direct dialogue between the two sides rather than a referendum, which has been delayed repeatedly by disputes over who is eligible to vote between Morocco and the independence-seeking Polisario Front.

"If a dialogue can advance that, then a dialogue would be useful but we do not ourselves propose anything beyond the U.N. secretary-general's plan," Mr. Pelletreau said.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali made new proposals to try to speed up the referendum process in the hope of meeting a January deadline for a vote and the Security Council is due to vote on the plan this week.

Turkey rejects PKK call

ANKARA (R) — Turkey on Tuesday rejected a ceasefire call by rebel Kurdish leader Abdullah "Apo" Ocalan for this month's parliamentary elections.

"Turkey does not take seriously his (Ocalan's) call for a ceasefire," Interior Minister Teoman Unusan told Reuters.

"Apo just makes it up as he goes along — he is not a man to be taken seriously," Mr. Unusan said.

Mr. Ocalan, leader of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), called on the Turkish military on Monday to agree to a ceasefire during general polls due to take place on Dec. 24.

The PKK has been fighting for independence or autonomy in southeast Turkey since 1984. More than 18,000 people have been killed in the insurgency.

The rebels called a unilateral ceasefire in 1993, which held for nearly three months until the guerrillas killed 33 unarmed soldiers in a bus ambush after complaining Turkey had not reciprocated.

There have been no visits by senior U.S. officials to Algeria in years. An estimated 40,000 people have died in political violence in Algeria since 1992, when the authorities scrapped elections which Islamists were poised to win.

The situation in Algeria after the elections provides an opportunity for the reconciliation process and we for our part have encouraged President (Lamine) Zeroual to pursue this path," Mr. Pelletreau said.

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of the region and protect the animals, especially gazelles, from poachers," Ahmad Shehata from the Egyptian Environment Agency said.

The region is home to some 30 endemic plant species, including types useful in treating diabetes and other diseases, botanist Mohammad Al Qassas said.

Ten per cent of the grant will go to restoration of St. Catherine's, where cracks in the walls have grown since last November's earthquakes off the Sinai coast.

"The money will be for anyone who wishes to finance restoration. Our job is to open the way for a quick repair of the monastery which risks ruin," Mr. Zens said, adding that the EU itself could take up the work.

The Greek Orthodox monastery, which has a surrounding wall dating back to the Roman Emperor Justinian (527 A.D.), features a Byzantine church and a library of more than 3,500 manuscripts.

"Restorations made over the centuries, mostly by the

monks have not kept cracks from appearing," said Michael Pearson, an EU expert in charge of several environmental projects in the Sinai.

He also warned of the dangers of increased tourism to the monastery.

"There are currently between 1,500 and 3,000 tourists a day, but that could double with more and more hotels in the Sinai and tourism cooperation projects between Egypt, Jordan and Israel," Mr. Pearson said.

He proposed limiting the number of sightseers and building a visitor's centre where some of the treasures would be displayed.

"Most of the tourists come not for religious reasons but to enjoy the site and its treasures, especially the icons and the burning bush," the EU expert added.

Mr. Pearson said he would prefer tourists pay for tickets to enter the monastery to help pay for restoration, but "the monks insist it is a place of worship open to all."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCH

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 62785. St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590. Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757. Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366. Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625525.

Armenian Church Tel. 630851. Tel. 628543.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephram Church Tel. 771751.

Armenian International Church Tel. 625265.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675581. The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

AMMAN:

Dr. Bassam Karadash 759200

Dr. Mukhlis Halasah 819230

Dr. Muthier Al Orieni 779959

Firas pharmacy 661912

Firdous pharmacy 778336

Al Asmaa pharmacy 637055



REFORM PROGRAMME REVIEW: Planning Minister Rima Khalaf Tuesday reviews Jordan's economic reform programme for the years 1996-1998 with a delegation of Jordanian businessmen, headed by Hamdi Tabba'a. Also reviewed were economic issues, such as the banking sector, foreign trade, and the privatisation strategy in Jordan. Dr. Khalaf stressed the importance of revitalising the role of the private sector with a view to enhancing its contribution to the national economy. In a reference to foreign competition, Mrs. Khalaf said such competition should motivate the private sector to play a more active role in the investment projects in the country, taking advantage of the opportunity and encouraging economic climate. She noted that the government has not so far made any commitments to foreign companies or institutions to carry out investment projects in Jordan. She called for bridging the gap in the viewpoints of both the private and public sectors and to come up with policies designed to serve national interests (Petra photo)

Minister stresses need for integrated organisation of tourist services

AMMAN (J.T.) — Nearly one million visitors from outside the Arab World visited Jordan during 1995, registering a 40 per cent increase over the number of visitors in 1994, according to Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Abdul Khafif Tuesday.

Speaking at a meeting organised by the Friends of Archaeology Society (FAS) in Jordan, the minister said on some days up to one thousand visitors converge on Wadi Rum in southern Jordan, something which has been unprecedented and which requires better organisation of the tourist services in that particular area.

The area started to witness a great increase in the number of visitors following the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty in October of last year, said the minister.

The minister stressed need for integrated services for visitors in Wadi Rum.

Rum and announced the formation of a special committee grouping representatives of various government ministries and public and private organisations to work out a plan for the management of tourist services in Wadi Rum.

The ministry of tourism encourages the private sector to initiate tourism-related projects in Wadi Rum which has been attracting the interest of visitors from around the world, added the minister.

Ghazi Bisbeh, head of the antiquities department expressed the view that tourism in Jordan cannot be developed without the participation of local communities.

FAS President Rami Khouri outlined the society's activities and endeavours to help protect archaeological sites and pointed out that society members will continue cooper-

ing with ministry officials to safeguard antiquities and artefacts found in Wadi Rum and other archaeological sites.

He reiterated the need for the public and private sectors to join in the course of preserving the national heritage of archaeological and historic places which are witnessing a great boom in tourism.

Several Wadi Rum local community leaders attended the meeting and called for concerted efforts to develop tourism in the region.

They called for the employment of local residents in tourism services activities and support and for the provision of assistance to the local cooperative society.

Ministry officials have predicted that Jordan will earn a total of JD 850 million compared to JD 600 million in the past year.

She called for greater efforts in voluntary efforts and to direct existing ones towards social action in the Arab World.

Mrs. Damen-Masri noted that Arab capabilities were evident in the Arab participation in the deliberations of the social summit held in Copenhagen and in the active participation in the Beijing women's conference, both held earlier this year.

The minister paid tribute to the coordination efforts among Arab countries manifested in the two recommendations after the Beijing conference which requested all Arab countries to be registered in one list at the United Nations social affairs.

During the meeting the participants reviewed the federation's activities of the past year, a budget for 1996 and discussed a number of matters related to chambers of commerce and means for further stimulating their work.

He said that the shortage in school buildings in Aqaba, causing congestion in the classrooms, and urged the ministry to build more schools in the city.

He said the increases in student population were due to new inhabitants in the Red Sea resort city and to the settlement of bedouins in villages around the town.

As a temporary measure, the official said, the department has been allowing schools to run two shifts to make up for the shortage of school buildings, particularly for primary stage students.

He said the total number of schools in the governorate now stands at 70, and 51 of those are run by the Ministry of Education, 13 by the private sector and six by the Jordanian Armed Forces Educational Department.

'Free trade agreements should be preceded by acquisition of scientific knowledge'

MADABA (Petra) — The Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce (FJCC) Tuesday called on various chambers in Jordan to streamline their activities with the new trend in the national Jordanian economy and play a key role in stimulating investments and trade.

The call was made by the federation's chairman Haidar Murad in an address to the opening session of the annual federation meeting held at Ihsan Hotel at the Ma'in Spa south of Madaba, attended by representatives of various chambers of commerce in the

Kingdom. After outlining the federation's contributions and participation in the Amman economic summit and the Barcelona meeting, Mr. Murad said future cooperation between European nations and countries around the Mediterranean Sea, including Jordan, requires among other things, the creation of a free trade zone by the year 2010.

He said Jordan should rise to the occasion and cater to the needs of the new stage in its relations with Europe.

"Opening our doors for free trade should be preceded

by the acquisition of scientific knowledge for ourselves as well as the commitment to internationally accepted standards and specifications and the improvement on our part of the quality of products because competition in the free markets will not be a bed of roses," Mr. Murad said.

"To help achieve that goal and enable Jordan to be come competitive in world markets, the chambers of commerce in the country have to make their own contributions and to do so, they can benefit from the information centre, based at

the federation's headquarters," he said.

Mr. Murad said the centre provides sufficient and important information for merchants, importers and exporters and businessmen with the names and addresses of international companies and business firms outside Jordan.

During the meeting the participants reviewed the federation's activities of the past year, a budget for 1996 and discussed a number of matters related to chambers of commerce and means for further stimulating their work.

COMING ON

FILM

* "Bhaji on the Beach" at the British Council at 7.00 p.m.

* Screening of the best European and Arab commercials at the French Cultural Centre at 8.00 p.m.

LECTURES

* Information session on CPA qualifications and the Becker preparatory course at Forte Grand Hotel on Wednesday 13 Dec. at 7.00 p.m. and Friday 15 Dec. at 4.00 p.m.

* "Boundaries, Roads and Farms of Ancient Gerasa" by Jacques Seigne at the Friends of Archaeology Centre at 6.30 p.m.

* "Contemporary German Art in the Ludwig Collection and the Projects of Ludwig Forum" by Prof. Wolfgang Becker, director of

Ludwig Museum, Aachen, Germany at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh at 5.30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by artist Hind Nasser at Darat Al Funun (until Jan. 6).

"Photography by poet Ibrahim Nasrallah entitled "The Autobiography of an Eye" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh. (Until Jan. 4).

* Photography exhibition "Biblical Itineraries" at the French Cultural Centre. (Until Dec. 30).

CHRISTMAS SALE

* Gifts and crafts by Suha Lallas Kassisieh (includes Christmas items, table mats, baskets, wall-hangings, candle-holders and side-lamps) at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra Street (until Dec. 31).

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mosque to undergo JD 3.85m renovation

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Commission for the Restoration of the Prophet Mohammad's Companions Mosques and Tombs and a local contracting company Tuesday signed a JD 3.85 million agreement for the renovation of Abu Ubaidah Amer Ben Al Jarrah mosque in the northern Jordan Valley. The agreement was signed for the Commission by its chairman, Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid, the Chief Chamberlain. Director General Hassan Hawamdeh signed the agreement for his company. Under the agreement the contracting company will build a comprehensive compound at the tomb sites, and conduct maintenance to the minaret of the mosque. Head of the Ministry of Awqaf's construction and maintenance department Mohammad Shomali said the design of the new Abu Ubaidah compound, including the mosque, took into consideration the various religious, developmental, social and economic dimensions. The design also took into consideration Islamic architectural designs. Mr. Shomali said. He added that the compound includes a major prayer area, including one for women, a basin surrounded by columns and arches, a library, a school and a house for teaching Koran.

Transport team leaves for Russia

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian transport delegation, headed by director of the Land Transport Department Abdillah Jbour today leaves for Russia and Hungary to hold talks with Russian and Hungarian officials on fees collected by customs officials in these countries from Jordanian refrigerated

Editor testifies in Abu Rishieh case

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The editor of Al Hiwar newspaper, testifying Tuesday in the case of Muslim militant Abu Abu Rishieh, told the State Security Court that he published an interview with Mr. Abu Rishieh because he saw no Royal family names in the interview.

Mr. Abu Rishieh, 53, accused of belonging to an illegal organisation and of slandering against His Majesty King Hussein following an interview that was published in the Arabic weekly, Al Hiwar on Oct. 6, pleaded innocent to both charges. During the 15-minutes

session, Abdullah Mohammad Bani Issa, told the court that he took a quick look at Mr. Abu Rishieh's interview and searched for Royal family members' names but found none, and thus decided to publish the interview.

The State Prosecutor General's charge sheet said Mr. Abu Rishieh, a spokesman of the illegal Hezb Al Tahrir, made several remarks in the interview which were slanderous to the King.

Mr. Abu Rishieh's attorneys had contested these allegations in a previous court session, stating that Mr. Abu Rishieh reflected political thoughts and what

he said was based on interpretations of Islamic Sharia.

Mr. Abu Rishieh was apprehended in his office in Ruseifeh by authorities on Oct. 15, nine days after he was interviewed by the newspaper.

Presiding Judge, Hafez Amin postponed the hearing to Wednesday (today) when Mr. Bani Issa will testify again concerning a letter that was sent to him by Mr. Abu Rishieh after the interview was published in the newspaper.

A sentence is expected to be announced after two court sessions. If found guilty, Mr. Abu Rishieh could receive up to three

years imprisonment. Also Tuesday, the State Security Court postponed the case of six people accused of sabotage, to Dec. 16 because an explosives expert, who was to testify for the prosecution, failed to show up in court.

On Dec. 10, the expert witness appeared in court but without the explosives (the evidence) seized when the authorities apprehended the suspects.

The six people known as "Islamic revivalists" are accused of illegally possessing and manufacturing explosive materials, automatic weapons and guns for illegal use, and belonging to an illegal organisation.

Aftershocks are declining, situation is reassuring, says Aqaba governor

AQABA (Petra) — The earthquake which hit Aqaba Monday registering 5.5 on the Richter Scale prompted a meeting Tuesday attended by various private and public organisations and other concerned parties in the city to discuss and review preparedness to deal with the consequences of the recurrent tremors.

He said the situation was reassuring and that there was no need for panic.

Geophysicists told the Jordan Times that the Monday quake which registered 5.5 on the Richter Scale had its centre located 120 kilometres south of Aqaba. He also said the aftershocks were gradually declining.

The CDD and other concerned departments have distributed pamphlets to schools, factories and other organisations providing advice and instructions to the public on what to do during earthquakes.

Meanwhile, Dr. Khasawneh Tuesday chaired the opening session of a two-day meeting organised by the UN Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to review international documents dealing with refugees as well as the International Humanitarian Law and the right of persons to request asylum in the Kingdom.

Dr. Khasawneh told the 26 participants that Jordan has been hosting refugees over the past five decades.

He also paid tribute to the UNHCR's services to the refugees.

Zuhaidah Haseem, the resident UNHCR representative in Jordan outlined her office's activities and noted that the UNHCR has been closely cooperating with non-governmental organisations like the Jordan National Red Crescent Society, the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development, the International Commission of the Red Cross, as well as charitable organisations.

Education official says more schools are needed in Aqaba

AQABA (Petra) — An official from the Ministry of Education Tuesday said there was a shortage in school buildings in Aqaba, causing congestion in the classrooms, and urged the ministry to build more schools in the city.

The shortage is being increasingly felt in view of the 8.5 per cent annual increase in the number of students who enrol at the schools in the port city and the Aqaba governorate, the official, Mohammad Zweiiri said.

He said the increases in student population were due to new inhabitants in the Red Sea resort city and to the settlement of bedouins in villages around the town.

As a temporary measure, the official said, the department has been allowing schools to run two shifts to make up for the shortage of school buildings, particularly for primary stage students.

He said the total number of schools in the governorate now stands at 70, and 51 of those are run by the Ministry of Education, 13 by the private sector and six by the Jordanian Armed Forces Educational Department.

According to Ziyad Ja'abari, a headmaster at a local school, the students in the two shift schools face hardships starting classes as early as 6:20 a.m., while the teachers find it hard to work in the afternoon shift, particularly in the hot season.

Mr. Jabbari said that the ideal classroom should not seat more than 30 students if the learning process is to be successful.

At the beginning of the current scholastic year the Ministry of Education said that nearly 315 million students at different stages started attending classes in 58,000 schools run by the ministry and the private sector as well as the Jordanian Armed Forces and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

NEWS IN BRIEF

ated trucks crossing into these countries. In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, Mr. Jbour said Jordan and Hungary are governed by a land transport agreement, organising movement of trucks in both countries. However, he said, the case is different with Russia where there is no such agreement governing land transport. He noted that refrigerated trucks carrying Jordanian plates pay an amount ranging between \$900 and \$1,600 according to the road they use within the Russian boundaries. Mr. Jbour said recent years have witnessed an increase in Jordanian exports, mainly agricultural exports to these countries, a matter calling for better organising land transport between Jordan and those countries.

RJ officials evaluate sales activities

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Jordanian (RJ) regional directors and senior officers Sunday meet here to evaluate RJ sales and marketing activities inside and outside Jordan, and to discuss the RJ operation plan for the year 1996, according to Majdi Sabri, deputy director general for marketing and sales. Dr. Sabri said the RJ's board director Walid Kurdi and Chief Executive Officer Nader Dahabi will address RJ's 32nd conference, and will brief participants on the airline's future plans and aspirations in light of the structural changes in the airline industry worldwide. The conference will be preceded by a three-day workshop in which RJ regional directors, and representatives of the various departments will take place. The workshop seeks to assess marketing and sales methods and to agree on a work plan geared to cope with the new changes in the field of airline industry and ensure a cut in expenditure and increased revenues.

Russian candidate survives assassination bid in Caucasus

MOSCOW (AP) — unidentified gunmen opened fire on the car of an independent candidate in the Russian parliamentary elections early Tuesday as he was driving home in Essentuki in the northern Caucasus but he was unscathed. Interfax News Agency reported.

Alexander Kashcheev told Interfax that shots were fired at his car from another car parked near his home at around 2:00 a.m. (2300 GMT Monday). Two bullet holes were later found in his car, he said.

Yuri Shein, the Interior Ministry chief in Essentuki, confirmed the shooting incident Tuesday, saying a window had been shattered in Mr. Kashcheev's car and inside there were indications that shots had been fired from a hunting rifle.

Mr. Kashcheev, who is campaigning in a district which includes the city of Siniyevsk, said he believed the incident was linked to his criticism of the local mafia and its connections with the leadership of the Stavropol region.

He said newspapers in Stavropol had recently published articles in which he criticised the local authorities.

He had received several threats against his family, he said, and one of his car's brake cables was severed.

Mr. Kashcheev runs a construction company called Nuklon.

The attack was the latest in a series of shootings targeting candidates in the

Dec. 17 elections to the State Duma (lower house).

Mikhail Lezhnev, a candidate for the centrist bloc Our Home Is Russia, was found shot dead Friday outside his home in the Urals city of Chelyabinsk.

He was the fourth Duma deputy to die violently in the past 19 months, and the second in a month.

Meanwhile Russian opinion pollsters are getting cold feet ahead of Sunday's parliamentary elections, faced with the difficulty of sampling trends across 11 time zones and a volatile society still going through the birth pains of democracy and the free market.

In the last general elections on Dec. 12, 1993, ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky shocked forecasters by storming to first place in the proportional ballot with a massive eleventh-hour swing netting him 23 per cent of the votes.

Two years later, Russian pollsters are hedging their bets.

"There is so much uncertainty that I'm not risking any forecasts" for Sunday's elections, said Alexander Orlon, director of the Foundation For Public Opinion, one of Russia's leading polling institutes.

Leonid Sedov, deputy director of Vtsoi, another top institute, said it was "still a matter for debate" whether public opinion existed in Russia.

For 70 years, the expression of public opinion was suppressed under the Soviet

regime, and as a result many Russians are still reluctant to voice public opinion and dissent, Mr. Sedov said.

For example, the army's assault on the Russian parliament building to crush a rebellion in October 1993 and the brutal war waged in Chechnya since December 1994 have met with relative apathy from a large portion of the Russian population.

The traditional absence of democracy and public debate has produced a mass of voters whose opinions are unsophisticated and volatile — a tough challenge for the polling institutes.

"The same individual can tell us that he is voting for Zhirinovsky and that he respects (former Soviet dissident) Andrei Sakharov more than anybody else in the world — essentially an incoherent response," said Mr. Sedov.

Political sociology is still in its infancy in Russia. The Vtsoi Institute, a pioneer in the field, was only set up in 1988 by a Soviet Communist Party which belatedly started taking an interest in the opinions of the people it ruled.

Mr. Sedov said former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was "the first to try to carry out reforms by taking account of public opinion."

Originally funded by official trade unions and the Labour Ministry, Vtsoi later became independent, and its main clients now are companies who use its marketing surveys to test their

target consumers.

Russian polling institutes are still far from their Western counterparts in terms of resources, with Vtsoi's 80 employees packed into cramped quarters with peeling walls in the city centre.

However, institutes are becoming more professional and gaining credibility, and like Russians elsewhere they are quickly mastering Western methods.

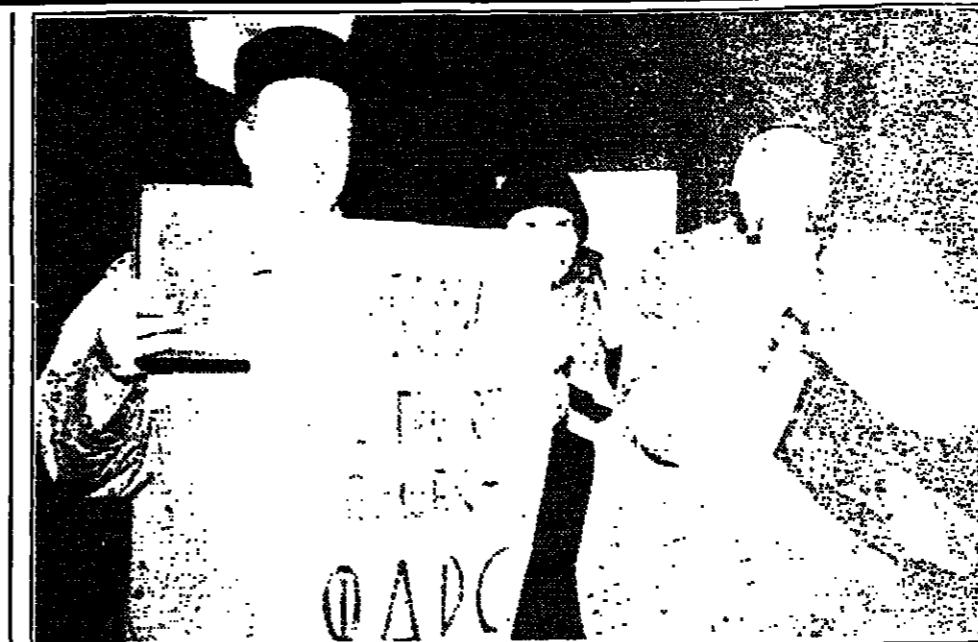
The leading institutes take national samples of at least 1,600 people, questioned by telephone at home.

The pollsters have learnt their lesson from the shock success of Mr. Zhirinovsky in the 1993 vote, making their surveys more representative by including more people living in the Russian hinterland or on the edge of society.

The Foundation for Public Opinion has perfected a computer model which through a series of comparisons "helps us to gauge the political views of those who don't voice them," said Orlon, proudly displaying the diskette containing the magic programme.

With 43 movements and parties in the line-up for the Dec. 17 elections, the pollsters know that their credibility is at stake.

While predicting a victory for the Communist Party they have stressed that only just over one-third of the electorate has decided how to vote.



Moscow Muslims pray holding the Koran and a poster saying "Elections under the guns' thunder is a farce" on Lubyanskaya Square, marking the anniversary of the beginning of the war in Chechnya (AFP photo)

Opponents of Chechen war mark anniversary

MOSCOW (R) — Russian opponents of the Kremlin's war in Chechnya gathered in Moscow to mark the first anniversary of the conflict and rally their liberal supporters ahead of next Sunday's parliamentary elections.

"Starting a war is very easy. Stopping it is much harder," Yegor Gaidar, leader of the Liberal Democratic Choice of Russia bloc, told the meeting in central Moscow.

He described the year-long conflict as a blow not just for Chechnya but also for Russian democracy, and said President Boris Yeltsin had to bear the main responsibility for "this terrible tragedy".

Despite the war's unpopularity in Russia, Mr. Gaidar said it had undermined the political position of liberal reformers in the country. "We were not strong enough to stop it," he said.

"If we had really gone out on the streets in force a year ago, we could have stopped it," said Sergei Yushenkov, another opponent of Chechen rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev on the streets of Grozny, as Russian tanks and helicopters patrolled.

The Moscow rally coincided with a noisy demonstration by around 10,000 supporters of Chechen rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev on the streets of Grozny, as Russian tanks and helicopters patrolled.

The rally passed without incident although later in the evening Interfax News Agency reported a half-hour gunbattle in the city around the Russian military headquarters.

Mr. Dudayev, in hiding in the mountains, has vowed to disrupt the voting next Sunday. Ruslan Khatsibulatov, the former Russian parliament head, pulled out of the race Saturday, saying the election threatened a shaky truce in place since July.

That left Moscow-appointed leader Doku Zavagayev as the only serious contender, rendering the ballot all but meaningless.

But the head of the local Electoral Commission said voting would definitely go ahead and forecast a turnout of 60 per cent.

Of 420 polling stations throughout Chechnya, 398 were ready. Abdul-Kerim Arsakhanov told Reuters. But their locations were being kept secret for now to limit the risk of attacks.

Few local people seem willing to vote, however, and the possibility of staging an election in rebel territory seems remote.

Mr. Kovalyov told the Moscow rally it was impossible to have a free vote in Chechnya with military patrols and roadblocks. "This election is a provocation," he said. Moscow was in effect demanding unconditional surrender by the Chechens.

Mr. Gaidar, an unknown economist, was plucked from obscurity by Mr. Yeltsin four years ago to spearhead Russia's drive to a market economy. He finally quit the government after elections two years ago led to a slowdown in reforms and broke decisively with Mr. Yeltsin over Chechnya.

The war in the small north Caucasus republic, effectively still under way at a lower level of intensity, has cost the lives of more than 2,600 Russian servicemen and an estimated 40,000 civilians. The regional capital Grozny is still largely in ruins.

Three-star General Eduard Vorobyov, who was forced out of the army after refusing to command the Chechen assault, told the meeting of around 1,000 Gaidar supporters: "Today it is clear this war should never have been started."

Gen. Vorobyov is standing as a candidate for the State Duma on Mr. Gaidar's party list. The party faces a tough struggle to

clear the five per cent minimum hurdle to make sure it enters the lower house.

Russia's leading human rights advocate Sergei Kovalyov told the meeting: "This is not just a crisis for Chechnya, it is a crisis of federal power, a crisis gripping your country and mine."

Russian authorities moved extra troops and police into Moscow to patrol the centre and keep guard on public buildings against surprise raids by Chechen separatists.

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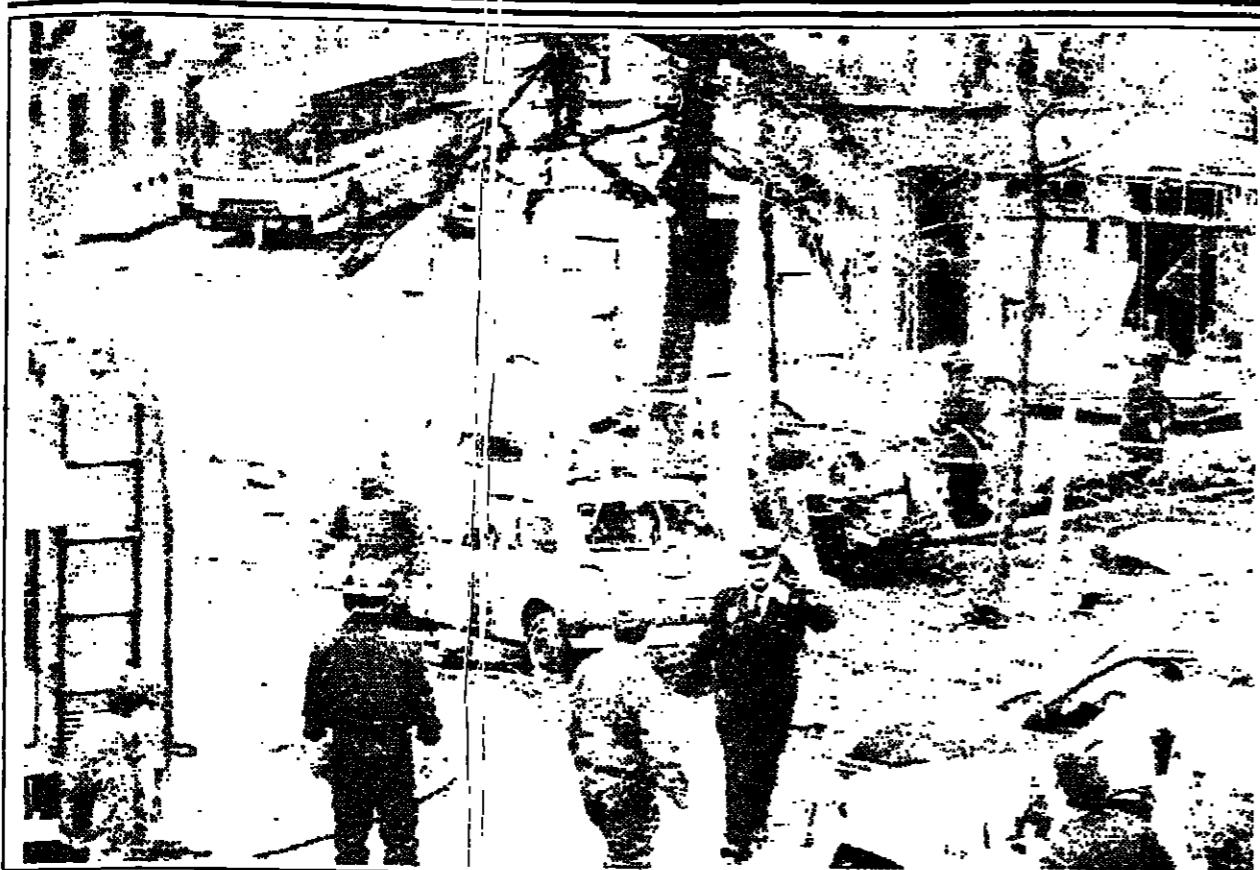
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Police and firemen inspect the site where a car bomb exploded on the outskirts of Madrid. Five people were killed in the ETA attack (AFP photo)

ETA sends warning to Spain ahead of EU summit

MADRID (AFP) — With its bloody bomb attack in Madrid four days before an EU summit in the Spanish capital, the Basque separatist group ETA has sent a clear signal to the government that it remains a force to be reckoned with, police said Tuesday.

Six people — all military civil servants — were killed Monday and about a dozen injured in the deadliest explosion of its kind in Spain in 2 1/2 years.

The death toll could even go higher as one of the wounded was fighting for his life Tuesday and four others were in serious condition.

By detonating the bomb just four days before European Union (EU) leaders are due to open a two-day summit here, ETA served notice that, despite recent successes by the anti-terrorist police, the sepa-

ratists still retained a solid infrastructure in the city, where they have traditionally mounted their most spectacular raids, police and the press said.

Press reports quoted some police officials as saying that Monday's attack was part of a new "terrorist campaign" launched by ETA last Nov. 10 in the western city of Salamanca where a car bomb seriously wounded a army captain.

They said the campaign could be linked to the legislative elections — scheduled for next March — which the conservative Popular Party (PP) is widely expected to win after 13 years of Socialist rule.

Thousands of Madrid residents observed five minutes of silence Tuesday in memory of the victims, heading a cull from city hall. Several radio stations interrupted their pro-

grammes and civil servants filed out of their offices to take part in the silent protest.

Madrid Mayor Jose Maria Alvarez Del Manzano decreed that Tuesday would be a day of mourning in the city where flags were flying at half mast.

Defense Minister Gustavo Suarez Pertierra was to attend the funeral for the victims later in the day.

In the Basque country, the pacifist group Gesto For La Paz also sponsored hundreds of protest demonstrations across the region.

It is not the first time that ETA struck at a "symbolic" date.

On June 12, 1985, the day Spain signed its admission to the European economic community, ETA, which is fighting for the independence of the northern Basque region, killed two soldiers and a policeman in

separate attacks. The daily *El País* noted in an editorial that such spectacular attacks covered by hundreds of journalists "are always a prized encouragement for the killers who practice propaganda through action."

In recent years, anti-terrorist police have dismantled dozens of ETA cells.

"ETA rearms to greet the PP," said the Catalan daily *La Vanguardia*, explaining that the ETA offensive aimed at "forcing a dialogue" with the conservatives who are tipped to gain power next year.

But the PP and the entire political establishment have rejected such a dialogue.

"Terrorists must understand that their barbarism will meet with no other response than law and police efficiency," PP leader Jose Maria Aznar warned.

N. Korea warns against U.S. military adventurism

SEOUL (Agencies) — North Korea Tuesday said it would take "countermeasures" against U.S. military manoeuvres with South Korea and Japan, accusing Washington of plotting an attack.

"Now that the United States is scheming to bring the military adventure against our system into practice together with South Korea and Japan, we cannot but feel exposed to threat and will unavoidably have to take countermeasures," the North's Foreign Ministry warned in a statement.

It did not say what the countermeasures would be, but denounced U.S. and South Korean troops for staging a massive joint air exercise targeting the North in December.

The North's warning, carried by its official mouthpiece Korean Central News Agency, came with South Korean Armed Forces on a five-month alert against any attack from North Korea.

On Tuesday, the military

here announced plans for a massive air raid drill Friday in and around Seoul to test South Korea's readiness against North Korean air attacks.

On Monday, South Korean President Kim Young-Sam said the North's military now has the final say on important issues because North Korean President Kim Il-Sung's son, Kim Jong-Il, has not yet officially succeeded his father, who died in July 1994.

"It has been more than one year since the death of Kim Il-Sung but no one has succeeded him. This means the military has taken power in North Korea," the president said.

He urged South Korea to be ready for a possible emergency on its hostile policy toward (North Korea)," the North's statement said.

The statement also urged Washington to stop military confrontation with the North, which it said was "sincerely" implementing its agreement concluded

with Washington last year. The landmark agreement defused a crisis over the North's controversial nuclear programme and paved the way for normalization talks between Washington and Pyongyang for the first time since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Meanwhile, a North Korean foreign exchange dealer defected to the South with his family Tuesday in the latest sign of trouble in the Communist-ruled country, which is reported to be on the brink of famine.

Choi Se-Ung, his wife and two children arrived at Seoul's Kimpo Airport from an unspecified European country.

"He said he decided to defect because he was disgusted with the North Korean system while working in a capitalist country," said a spokesman for Seoul's Agency for National Security.

Mr. Choi, 34, would be the first Pyongyang foreign exchange dealer to defect to Seoul in five minutes.

"The North is starving and poor," the president said.

S. Korea's Kim slams Roh, Chun as 'shameless'

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam bitterly attacked his two detained predecessors as "shameless" Tuesday and vowed to restore national pride.

But Mr. Kim's first public comments on the political scandals engulfing his country were immediately branded as a whitewash by the main opposition party, which demanded Mr. Kim apologize for his links to the disgraced ex-presidents.

Disappointed investors sold stock. They had expected greater clarity from Mr. Kim on a crisis that has put ex-Presidents Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae-Woo behind bars.

"Instead of coming forward to repent and beg for forgiveness for their past wrongdoings, they further infuriated the people with shameless behaviour and remarks that are an affront to history," Mr. Kim said, referring to Mr. Chun and Mr. Roh.

"Setting history to rights

is a 'revolution of honour' to recover the nation's self-esteem and open a bright future for our nation," Mr. Kim said in the statement released by the presidential press office.

Meanwhile, state prosecutors probing a 1979 military coup that thrust then army Major-General Chun to power, visited the home of Choi Kyu-Hah, caretaker head of state at the time.

Mr. Chun faces mutiny charges stemming from the putsch.

Mr. Choi, 76, had snubbed a prosecution summons to appear for questioning, citing ill health.

He took over as president after the assassination of former President Park Chung-Hee.

It was not clear whether Mr. Choi was now cooperating with prosecutors.

Mr. Kim said the scandals were an enormous shock to South Koreans and had damaged the country's international reputation.

He vowed to "crush any

anti-historical and anti-democratic challenges" to his task of clearing up the past.

Mr. Kim's statement came on the 16th anniversary of the 1979 coup that led to an army massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators in the city of Kwangju the following May, with an official death toll of about 200 people.

Mr. Chun threw down a challenge to Mr. Kim the day before his arrest on Dec. 3 by refusing to cooperate with prosecutors probing the putsch.

Mr. Roh will stand trial this month on charges of taking \$369 million in bribes from tycoons to top up a vast political slush fund which he confessed to amassing.

Mr. Kim has been accused by opposition parties of dipping into Mr. Roh's slush funds. He has denied taking "a single cent".

The Seoul Stock Exchange Index of shares closed 4.53 points lower at 943.22 in trading.

Sri Lanka refugees caught in rebel-army tug of war

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Hundreds of thousands of desperate Tamil civilians who fled savage fighting in the Jaffna peninsula have now become caught in a tug of war between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil Tiger guerrillas.

Both sides say refugee resettlement is top priority.

But the government, fresh from its victory in the peninsula, wants them to go home. The Tigers want them to resettle in areas which are still rebel-controlled.

Lawrence Thilakar, spokesman for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), said more than 200,000 Jaffna Tamils had fled fighting in the northern Jaffna peninsula where the armed forces captured the rebel stronghold of Jaffna town last week.

"Our priority is resettlement," Mr. Thilakar told Reuters Monday night from his Paris base when asked what plans the LTTE had hatched to counter the continuing armed forces offensive.

The government, eager to

win hearts and minds, wants families to return to their Jaffna homes where a major rebuilding operation is under way. Masons, carpenters, cement and roofing tiles are being shipped to the north.

When fighting intensified in the peninsula in the last few months, the refugees fled the only way they could — across a lagoon to a Tiger-controlled area known as the Vanni in the north of the mainland.

The LTTE in a statement faxed from London Tuesday, said more than

4,000 people were crossing to the Vanni each day and that LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran had ordered a "speedy relief package" with free transport to any point in the Vanni. More doctors and jobs would be provided.

They have seen what happened in Batticaloa after the STF attack. More than 30 civilians were killed.

Special Task Force (STF) police commandos backed by army and air force ground troops attacked several rebel jungle bases in the Batticaloa and Ampara districts over the weekend.

The military gave no casualty figures but says it takes all precautions in the camps at rebel-controlled Kilinochchi and elsewhere on the mainland.

"There are more and more people in Kilinochchi. The place cannot hold so many people," one said.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga assured Colombo-based Tamil leaders Monday the government

was doing all it could to alleviate suffering in the rebel-controlled camps, sending in regular shipments of food, and explained the rebuilding operation in Jaffna town.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's minority Tamil politicians Tuesday expressed dismay at President Kumaratunga's decision to press ahead with the military offensive in the country's north.

The president has indicated that military operations will continue and the next priority would be to open a land route to Jaffna peninsula through territory currently held by the Tamil separatists.

Tamil sources said Mrs. Kumaratunga promised she would present her peace package to a parliamentary select committee soon and expected Tamil legislators to encourage the Tigers to negotiate with the government.

"I expect others to take

half the risks that I take," Mrs. Kumaratunga was quoted as saying by a Tamil politician who was at Monday's meeting.

U.S. ambassador blasts Burma during U.N. human rights action

UNITED NATIONS (AFP)

— The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations blasted the Burmese government Monday as a U.N. committee passed a resolution deplored the human rights situation in that country for the fourth year in a row.

The third committee, which approves human rights measures before they go to the General Assembly, adopted it by consensus. The Burmese ambassador strongly protested the language of the resolution, but did not vote against it.

The announcement came only a day after backroom party boss Ichiro Ozawa said he too would run in the election following a decision by incumbent leader Toshiki Kaifu, yet another former prime minister, to bow out of the race.

"Hosokawa declared his support for Mr. Hata after considering the policies of the two candidates," a political aide said.

The New Frontier Party, the second biggest party in the Japanese parliament, was set up a year ago through the merger of several parties and groups, notably the Japan Renewal Party formed by Mr. Hata, Mr. Ozawa and dozens of other lawmakers who defected from the dominant Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in 1993.

Other members of the party are from the Buddhist-backed Komeito, the populist New Japan Party which used to be led by Mr. Hosokawa and the Democratic Socialist Party, which split from the left-wing Socialist Party 35 years ago.

Campaigning for the election starts this weekend. Voting is scheduled to end on Dec. 26 with the results being announced two days later.

Mr. Ozawa, the political strategist behind two LDP cabinets headed by Mr. Kaifu from 1989 as well as two non-LDP coalition governments formed by Mr. Hosokawa and Mr. Hata in 1993 and 1994, reportedly has the support of most lawmakers from the party.

Securities brokers said investors were disappointed by Mr. Kim's statement, which they found to be vaguely worded.

The market was hoping something good would come from Mr. Kim's speech, but it was disappointing because there was no clear statement of his relationship with the slush fund scandal," said Robert Song of Ssangyong Securities.

Mr. Kim has been accused by opposition parties of dipping into Mr. Roh's slush funds. He has denied taking "a single cent".

The Seoul Stock Exchange Index of shares closed 4.53 points lower at 943.22 in trading.

the government to "take all appropriate measures to allow all citizens to participate freely in the political process," and to take immediate steps for democracy.

Burmese Ambassador Win Mra said the resolution sponsored by Sweden, while more tame than the one passed last year, "does not accurately reflect the prevailing situation" in Burma and "will not serve any useful purpose."

"My delegation rejects all the negative elements in the draft before us," he said.

"These references clearly aim to portray the government of Myanmar (Burma) as systematically engaged in human rights violations. It has never been the policy of the government to condone violations of human rights."

He said the U.N. special rapporteur Yozo Yokota, who prepared the report on which the resolution was based, showed "a lack of balance and professionalism," and he asked for the measure to be thrown out.

The Burmese ambassador said any criticism of his government's handling of the convention was unfounded, because the NLD's non-participation "was the result of a premeditated action of one political party to mar the successes achieved so far" by the SLORC.

Kashmir hostages seen in local garb

SRINAGAR, India (R) — Four Western tourists held hostage by separatist guerrillas in Kashmir since July were spotted last week near Srinagar wearing local clothing.

"The hostages were last sighted on Dec. 7 wearing Firdaus (Kashmiri robes) in Akhangam village. They were seen guarded by the militants," a senior police official told Reuters in Srinagar, summer capital of India's Jammu and Kashmir state.

"Authorities have mobilised their local sources in southern Kashmir to know the whereabouts of the hostages," said the official, who asked not to be identified.

The official said the four tourists and their captors had periodically been sighted in different villages in southern Kashmir. Akhangam is located in Anantnag district, about 52 kilometres south of Srinagar.

Officials said they hoped that Al-Faran

militants holding American Donald Hutchings, German Dirk Hasert and Britons Paul Mangan and Keith Wells would re-establish contact after breaking communication more than two weeks ago.

"For the last 16 days there has been no contact, but we have not given up hope. We are still expecting that Al-Faran will talk to us and end the crisis," a state government official said.

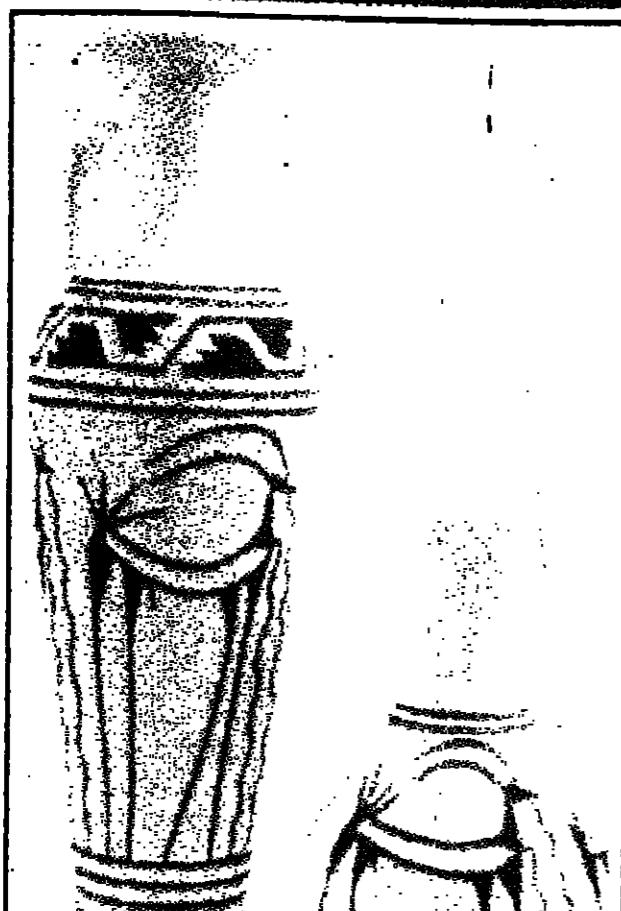
Al-Faran has repeatedly broken off talks with Indian officials after negotiations have stalled, and several times has issued death threats.

The tourists were picked up while on trekking holidays in the Himalayan region, riven by a bloody five-year-old separatist rebellion against Indian rule in which doctors and police say more than 20,000 people have died.

Wednesday, December 13 1995

Wednesday, December 13 1995

On the gift road for handicrafts



A selection of Bawadi rugs from Queen Alia Fund (right); bronze age amphora and juglet with pre-dynastic animals from Silsal (top); juglet with handle decorated with split leaf arabesque and narrow based jar with inscriptions bearing wishes of prosperity to the owner, also from Silsal



HOLIDAY SHOPPING—it's never easy, especially for finicky shoppers who demand nothing less than a unique gift or who long for a haven of holiday spirit. But a trip around town to Amman's plethora of craft shops should settle one's holiday hankering.

To facilitate you, we've even come up with an efficient shopping route!

Just beyond the First Circle, down Rainbow Street

find Jordan River

Designs. This beautiful little dwelling is a best-bet for gifts for the home. Their usual collection includes plush bedspreads and duvets and splashy throw pillows, designed by some of Jordan's best designers, all handsewn.

Other home accessories include lampshades, bath towels, framed mirrors, picture frames, traditionally embroidered with modern flair.

Especially for the holiday season, Jordan River Design designers have created a handful of fun holiday dinner table accessories—tablecloths, napkins and napkin rings, as well as handsewn stitched in holiday colours.

Attend a holiday dinner bearing gifts—a tasteful holiday basket from Jordan River Designs should do the trick—stuffed with holiday favourites—wine and cheese—and a few extras such as a pair of wine glasses in holiday colours.

Jordan River Designs will deck the halls for a Christmas Open House Dec. 15-17 and 22-24, with special extended shopping hours (from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.) on these days.

Continue your holiday revelling next door at the Bani Hamida House, an establishment that hardly needs an introduction.

Bani Hamida commenced its holiday happenings Dec. 10 and will carry on til

Jan. 2 selling their distinguished wares—durable and exquisite rugs, cushions and wall-hangings—in seasonal colours and new designs.

On to the Second Circle, just behind the Lebanese Embassy, rests the cozy house of hands, Al Aydi.

The shop has a handful of holiday wares—Hebron glass in seasonal colours with Christmas motifs painted in gold.

Keepsake boxes covered in Damascene jewel-toned 'sayeh' are a tasteful way to present a small gift, such as jewellery—also available at Al Aydi, and make great stocking stuffers.

Decorate a holiday dinner with a new take on Jerusalem pottery: these special ceramic pieces replace traditional blue with rich green as the dominant colour. This dinnerware is truly Jordanian, hand thrown in Salt.

Al Aydi is also a good stop for those shopping for collectors. The shop also has an extensive collection

of antique rugs, with a staff knowledgeable about the history and origin of each piece, as well as several interesting handwoven baskets and a collection of embroidered goods from both Jordan and Palestine, old and new.

Also find at Al Aydi a few pieces from Ammar Khammash and Silsal's holiday collection (see below).

Out Al Aydi's front gate, left towards the Inter-Continental Hotel, see a sign directing you to Bourgan, tucked away at the end of a small cul de sac.

Looking for anything with holiday motifs? Find it here. Bourgan is the holidays. Hand embroidered holiday pajamas and slippers for a long winter's nap, for adults, kids or babies. Neatly embroidered hand and bath towels trimmed in sayeh. Christmas stockings with plenty of room available to stuff them—a handsewn teddy bear in sayeh, for example. Holiday wine sacks. Christmas ornaments for the tree.

Bourgan also has a plethora of nick-nacks for the home such as quilted tea cozies and coasters in Islamic motifs. Be careful. You could get stuck here.

On to Jabal Weibdeh. On the main street leading to Duvar Hawouz, just opposite the French Cultural Centre and the Cairo-Amman Bank, find the Green Branch. This little shop is the embroidery authority. Small but well-stocked, the Green Branch offers embroidered goods from Jordan and Palestine.

During the Fourth and the Fifth Circle take a left after Ideal Systems (look for the Macintosh Apple). One hundred metres on the right, find Silsal. Jordan's house of pottery where sisters Rula Atallah and Reem Habayeb have been reviving the art.

Stoneware pieces—including vases, place settings, napkin rings, candle holders, coffee sets and bowls—based on Islamic

art are a comfortable addition to any home and are a tasteful gift. Most pieces are in earth tones. All are non-toxic, dishwasher and microwave safe.

Between the Fourth and the Fifth Circle take a left after Ideal Systems (look for the Macintosh Apple).

One hundred metres on the right, find Silsal. Jordan's house of pottery where sisters Rula Atallah and Reem Habayeb have been reviving the art.

Each holiday season Silsal designs a special line of seasonal pretties available for a limited time and never to be created again.

This year, Silsal's simple holiday pattern displays olive branches in muted green, interspersed with red

(QAF) is also indulging in holiday fun with their "Season of Joy" exhibition, which ends Dec. 12.

Visit the National Ceramics Centre on the Hussein Medical Centre Street, across from the Khalda Gas Station.

On show are QAF's varied collection of Bawadi rugs and wallhangings, batik tablecloths and napkins, exquisite Petra Pottery and other ceramic goods.

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What's On at Fuheis Al Ruwaq

JOIN THE new neighbourhood atmosphere with a "Night of Christmas on Stage" from the students of the Baptist School at the old Orthodox Church in Al Ruwaq at 4.00 p.m.

From Dec. 17 through 22, there will be a bazaar at the Greek Orthodox Church and on Dec. 19, the Noor Al Hussein Junior Band will perform festive music also at the old Orthodox Church at 4.00 p.m. Finally, on Dec. 22 there will be Christmas carolling all afternoon, from the YMCA choir members and the Young People of the Catholic Church in various parts of the Fuheis and Ruwaq neighbourhood.

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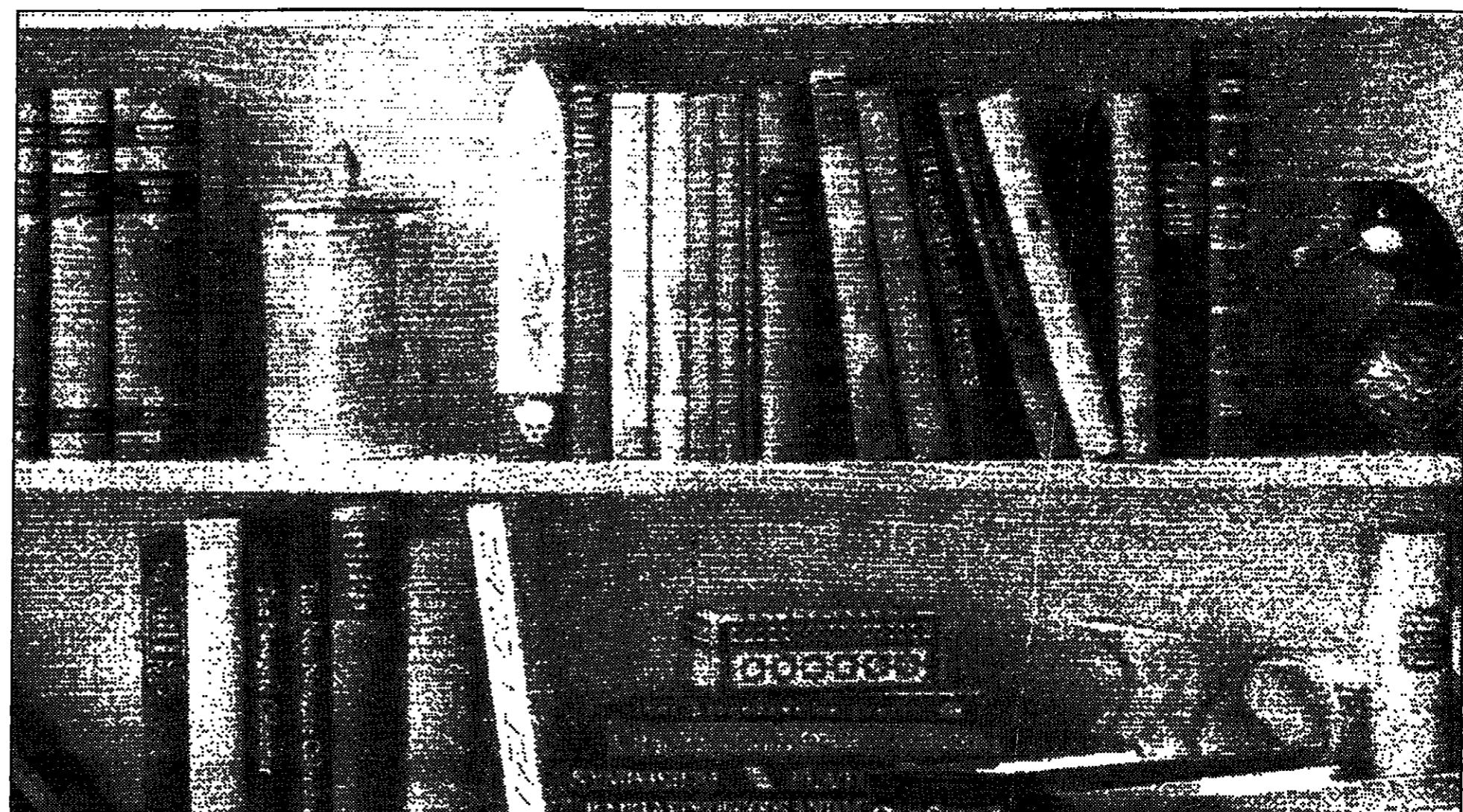
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Wednesday, December 13 1995

Heavenly havens Amman sprouts out with books for all tastes



HEAVEN, TO some, is a good bookshop and all the time in the world to read. And right here in Amman you can find a piece of that heaven, if you've at least got the time to read on here.

When it comes to books as gifts, you can hardly go wrong. Most people have interests, and it is all a matter of choosing the right subject for the person in mind. The problem is where to find the right book.

Although bookshops are definitely not sprouting out with the speed of fast food establishments, there are a few good places in Amman where you can buy recent and varied publications.

The Jordan Times visited four such bookshops: Philadelphia Bookshop, which is the newest, Sharbain and Amman bookshops and Jordan Book Centre.

And with the holiday season just around the corner, here's a sample of what you can find:

To start with the widest selection of books for the knowledge-hungry can be found at Philadelphia, in

Gardens St. Here is an intellectual's haven. In addition to the store's range of books, there is a library-style corner, a roundtable of international press and top of the list political and literary magazines to browse through. But that is all by the way. Now for gift ideas.

Know someone who has a basic interest for high-level arguments but is too afraid to reveal his/her naivete?

Well, here's a handy gift: Philosophy, mythology, politics, history, cultural and women's studies galore at the Philadelphia Bookshop.

From Marcus Aurelius' Meditations, a book that has been around for nearly 2,000 years, and is now a best seller, to a recent re-writing of history, neatly entitled Armageddon, by Clive Ponting.

Then there are those who everyone pretends to understand: philosophy from Jung (Man and His Symbols; Men, Dreams and Reflections) to Wittgenstein, Russell, Popper, Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault and the long outdated Freud.

But to get away from these men and their imposing symbols, there is a refreshingly large and up-to-date selection of women's literature and women's studies. Books by women about women and for all.

And yes, within those you will find the perfect gift: the trilogy of novels translated from Arabic to English by three Arab women authors. The set is edited from the U.K. by Fadia Fagir. Beautiful writing contained within non-traditional themes and postmodern approaches to style.

A sample of other names you may find on the women's studies shelf: academic gender studies by Leila Ahmed; anthropology (Veiled Sentiments) by Lila Abu Lughod; and "her-story" of the Two Queens of Baghdad by Naba Abbott in the new and still highly relevant edition.

The cultural studies section holds books of interest such as film-making, multi-media postmodernism and modern ideology: ideology and modern culture; while the politics and history sec-

tions are not confined to what the Europeans write about the Arabs, but extend shelf space to Arab historians and political writers, both recent and ancient.

sical text from the shelves of the French books section at the Philadelphia book-store.

Art books of every hue

and medium for the art

The Phaidon Art Series covering Goya, Picasso, Manet, Rembrandt, Cezanne, Modigliani, Van Gogh and others.

When it comes to art, though Philadelphia Bookshop remembers that it is during childhood that minds are best cultivated.

The children's section, therefore, has books detailing artists' lives and works (painting, music, and literature), complete with attractive graphics, as well as a wide range of children's literature from infancy to the teens.

If you know a parent who constantly complains about having to read to the children at bed-time (when she'd rather be watching T.V.), here's a good gift solution for the kids: Jordan Book Centre stocks book/cassette story-telling packs, with many titles to choose from.

And while you're there, why not give that same parent the gift: Who's Fit to Be A Parent?

Then there is row after row of the "Sweet Valley Twins" books at Philadelphia Bookshop, making great gifts for those problematic teens.

Know someone who is a gardener or nature lover, a creative herbalist, a vegetable grower? Books on these topics make fine gifts, and they can be found at all four stores.

For those with particular hobbies, namely carpet-weaving, rug-buying, jewellery selection, and pottery, Sharbain has illustrated books with titles such as Chinese Rugs—a buyer's guide, (for your jet-setting friend), Tribal Rugs (mother should know what she's stepping on), Kilims—the Complete Guide, (maybe it's about time you discovered what a Kilim is) Rings, (definitely not about wheat field extraterrestrial markings) Rough Diamonds and Creative Pottery.

Sharbain's other speciality is food.

Now, you must know someone who loves to cook, or eat, or philosophise on food, or all three. Yes, you can cook up a whole philosophy on food because Sharbain has the most amazing encyclopaedic-sized book entitled (simply): The History of Food.

This tempting tome tells you all about food symbolism, the mythology of food, its history and how it came to be that we eat certain things. "Coffee and Politics," for example, takes up a whole chapter.

From food to health. Have any friends or family

members who are uptight about their bodies, their babies and their brains?

Books on health, baby care and the brain drain that comes with life, are available at all four stores.

Eye-catching titles for those friends with particular woes: Teach Yourself Relaxation, (for almost anyone you know); Beyond Blame—A New Way of Resolving Conflicts in Relationships (a combined present for your married friends); How to Win Friends and Influence People, for the particularly ambitious, and finally, one that applies to our part of the world in particular: What's Left To Eat?—a book on the safety of food.

On the same note, a title worthy of mention here (for your radical feminist friend) is What Makes Women Sick—Gender and the Political Economy of Health. The book is available at Philadelphia and Sharbain.

Then there is always something for those who opt not to think too deeply: Amman Bookshop stocks a massive amount of best-sellers by authors with names as ornamental as their styles and content: Georgette Heyer, Ben Bova, Dean Koontz, Judith Krantz, Faye Kellerman and others.

Amman Bookshop also stocks Penguin publications, with randomly selected modern English novels.

But of more local interest, books on the archaeology of Jordan, with one impressive volume on the excavations of Jabal Al Qala' entitled The Great Temple of Amman—The Architecture, a detailed account of the architectural nature of the Roman temple in the Amman citadel.

And for those of your friends with an eye for graphics, Philadelphia Bookshop has original lithographs of the Holyland by David Roberts and Bartlett, an appropriate gift at this time of year.

Also of important note is the new publication on Petra, with photographs by Ammar Khammash. (Is he a photographer as well? And do the eyes of an architect/designer/cultural engineer extraordinaire and now photographer, see a different Petra altogether?)

The great thing about book-hunting is that there's always a handful of books that belong to no particular section, but which may sound just right for someone you know. A book on the only way to stop smoking? Quotations for lovers? A book on scarves? Well, maybe for that cousin who thinks she's got taste.

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Wednesday, December 13 1995

A special season for special giving

NO BETTER present than that present which is most needed.

In all holiday spirits, donations to the needy are constantly solicited and as always, people's generosity is relied upon. This year, the Jordan Times decided to make your act of giving easier by informing you of the charity organisations available to receive your donation.

The General Union for Voluntary Societies (GUVS) is responsible for funding 612 societies in 12 governorates in the Kingdom.

Of these societies, 196 are specialised in certain fields such as child care, senior citizens, orphans, income generating projects, rehabilitation of disabled persons and health, while 416 societies work in various fields, which include vocational training, child care, financial help for needy families, and community development.

GUVS distributes funds according to the amount of services contributed to the community, as well as the field and location of the society.

To donate your items or money, call the GUVS and let them know where you would like to have your donation sent. Here's a sample of some of the charitable societies in GUVS to help you choose.

Child care societies are funded annually with JD 300,000 to provide kindergartens with equipment and games, as well as training for teachers. GUVS provides care through the different societies to 28,150 children all over the Kingdom.

Income-generating projects for needy families aims to raise the economic standard of living for these families by encouraging them to depend on themselves in setting up their own projects.

The loans do not exceed JD 700 per individual and are paid back in easy term instalments.

The loans are granted after presentation of the necessary guarantees and proof of ability to carry out such projects.

The Charitable Plaster project started in 1986 and aims to finance the education of underprivileged children and provide rehabilitation equipment for disabled persons.

As a result of this project the GUVS provided financial support to 1,130 students at universities as well as schools between 1986 and 1993.

The Social Cooperation Project began in 1986 and accepts all kinds of donations including food, clothing, bedcovers, household equipment, all of which are distributed among the most needy societies responsible for orphans, senior citizens and disabled persons as well as directly to underprivileged families and rural schools located in underprivileged areas.

This project has helped tens of thousands of Jordanians.

The Rehabilitation Project For Disabled Persons: As a result of the high cost and accommodation services required, only 40 societies catering to 3,755 disabled persons are involved in this field. This project finances day care centres with unified designs, greenhouse projects, newspaper stands for disabled persons and a joint project with Hussein Medical City to teach Jordanians occupational therapy.

Donations to all the societies listed below can be

made through GUVS.

Beit Al Amal for the multi-handicapped is located in Yajouz.

The school caters to 100 children in its boarding school, and 50 children in the day care centre. It provides medical and social care, therapeutic and recreational activities, rehabilitation and integration of disabled children into the society.

The Islamic Boarding School for Blind Women is located in Mugableen. The school which caters for 20 underprivileged students from the different governorates of the Kingdom is the only school for blind women in Jordan.

The school accepts financial and in-kind donations such as winter clothes for children between the ages of seven to 18, shoes, food, sugar, rice, tea fruits, games and dolls. Tel. 756055

Ion Sina for Cerebral Palsy provides medical care and equipment for children suffering from cerebral palsy, and has a physical therapy centre for rehabilitation. Tel. 674634.

Petra for Disabled Persons is located in Mansura, Ma'an Governorate.

The society, which was established in 1991, provides care for children with hearing difficulties and for the mentally handicapped through social adjustment and rehabilitation programmes. It also provides assistance to the families of disabled persons. Tel. 83684 (Mansura, Ma'an).

Societies working in more than one field: Donations to the following societies can also be made through GUVS.

Women of South Azraq for Social Development is located in Zarqa.

The society trains women on income-generating projects, it also provides financial and in-kind assistance for needy families.

Balawneh for Charity is located in Balawneh, Irbid. It is responsible for a day care centre, and provides financial and in-kind assistance for needy families.

Al Shahabah for Charity is located in Shahabah, Karak. It operates a day care centre, provides financial assistance for needy families, trains women on income-generating projects, gives extensive classes for Tawjih.

Salt Islamic Charity Society is located in Salt, Balqa. The society operates two centres: a day care centre and a vocational-production training centre. It also provides financial and in-kind assistance for needy families.

Al Za'tary for Social Development is located in Al Za'tary, Mafraq Governorate. It operates a day care centre and a children's club; a training project for agricultural production, as well as financial and in-kind assistance for needy families.

Ras Muneef for Social Development is located in Ras Muneef, Ajloun. It plans to provide assistance for the families of handicapped children, but for the time being the society operates a day care centre and organises income-generating projects for women, which include training on tricot weaving. The society also provides financial and in-kind assistance for underprivileged families. Tel: 93-470150, Ras Muneef, Ajloun.

Jerash Women for Charity is located in Jerash, and specialises in training women on income-generating projects and local handicrafts. The society operates a day care centre



A Beit Al Amal therapist conducts vocal exercises with a handicapped child (top). Her Majesty Queen Noor greets children at the SOS village in Tabarbour



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WHERE WOULD the holidays be without hotels and restaurants? As if by tradition Amman's hospitality establishments and eateries annually plan a December calendar chock-full of activities for the young and the young-at-heart, including the various and sundry fanfares to welcome in the new year.

The Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel says it has dedicated the entire month of December to make its patrons' holiday season complete.

On the 14th, the hotel will start with its annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

A children's choir will sing Christmas carols, a giant Ginger Bread House will be on display, and Santa Claus himself is scheduled to make an appearance.

The hotel will offer complimentary Glühwein, hot chocolate, pudding, minced pies and many other goodies.

At the Café Boulevard, a wide selection of ginger bread, Christmas puddings, Christmas stollen, cakes and chocolate will be on sale until Dec. 28. You can order your holiday turkey and trimmings by calling the folks at the Food & Beverage Department at 641361 ext. 5, allowing 48 hours advance notice.

Christmas Eve dinner at El Pasha Restaurant promises a four-course dinner including roast young turkey breast stuffed with chestnut giblet sauce, fresh avocado with lemon zabaglione, shrimps with French dressing, smoked salmon and a surprise dessert. The dinner is for the whole family and will feature live entertainment.

On Christmas Day, the hotel's Grand Ballroom will be the site of a "traditional family lunch," where Santa will be handing out goodies and gifts for the children.

With live music and raffle prizes, families will select from a buffet menu of sea food, poached hamour in Belle-Vue quiche Lorraine, stuffed ham, roast, roast cold turkey, roast sirloin, and lamb ouzi.

Then on New Year's Eve patrons have a choice of celebrating at the Grand Ballroom with live music featuring the famous singer Sabbath Fakri, a belly dancer and a DJ from 10:00 p.m. to 12:15 a.m.

And the entertainment will continue. Some grandiose raffle prizes are in the offering including a car and airline tickets to InterContinental Hotels in Athens, Bangkok, Cairo, Geneva, Hurghada, London, Paris and Vienna. The Okaz and Bukhara restaurants will also offer New Year's Eve dining.

The Amman Marriott Hotel gets in the holiday spirit with a giant Christmas tree towering over its multi-levelled lobby and a programme of Christmas carols sung by schoolchildren from Amman. (The hotel asks that those interested call 607607 for a schedule of this programme).

Also planned, on Dec. 24, is a special "Night Before Christmas" ceremony in The Garden, with a bonfire and a choir singing your favourite yuletide melodies.

If baking is not your forte or your oven just happens to be on the blink, you might try La Patisserie which the hotel has transformed into a gingerbread house filled with Buche de Noël (yule log cakes) and Christmas puddings. In fact, if you order ahead, the Marriott's chefs will roast you a turkey complete with all the trimmings.

The Marriott also plans to offer a Christmas Eve dinner, Christmas Day lunch, New Year's Eve Dinner and its famous first of the year Breakfast Buffet Extravaganza.

For the bon vivants Il Castello has started offering a luncheon menu for the business sector and the "let's have lunch" crowd.

The menu provides different courses on a daily basis. It includes Italian appetizers, pasta, veal, fish or chicken dishes and desserts. All these accompanied with a free glass of sparkling white wine or a glass of Italian or French red or white wine.

The restaurant has been dressed up for Christmas, and gourmet food items including oysters, mussels, lan-



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عنوان: ٦٣٠ - ٦٣١ - ٦٣٢ - ٦٣٣ - ٦٣٤ - ٦٣٥ - ٦٣٦ - ٦٣٧ - ٦٣٨ - ٦٣٩ - ٦٣١٠ - ٦٣١١ - ٦٣١٢ - ٦٣١٣ - ٦٣١٤ - ٦٣١٥ - ٦٣١٦ - ٦٣١٧ - ٦٣١٨ - ٦٣١٩ - ٦٣٢٠ - ٦٣٢١ - ٦٣٢٢ - ٦٣٢٣ - ٦٣٢٤ - ٦٣٢٥ - ٦٣٢٦ - ٦٣٢٧ - ٦٣٢٨ - ٦٣٢٩ - ٦٣٢١٠ - ٦٣٢١١ - ٦٣٢١٢ - ٦٣٢١٣ - ٦٣٢١٤ - ٦٣٢١٥ - ٦٣٢١٦ - ٦٣٢١٧ - ٦٣٢١٨ - ٦٣٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٣ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٤ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٥ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٦ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٧ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٨ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢١٩ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٠ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢١ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٢ - ٦٣٢٢٢٢٢٢٢٣ - ٦

Dec. 19 is a public holiday

AMMAN (Petra) — All government ministries and departments and public institutions will observe an official holiday on Tuesday Dec. 19 to mark Isra'a Wal Mi'raj (the Prophet Mohammad's nocturnal journey to the heaven), a communiqué issued by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker said Tuesday.

Abdul Meguid set for second term

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab League Secretary General Esamat Abdul Meguid looks set for a second five-year term in office after winning the backing of two-thirds of the league's 22 members, sources said on Tuesday. League sources said 15 members have already supported Dr. Abdul Meguid's candidature — Lebanon, Syria, the Palestinians, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Somalia, Libya, Algeria, Mauritania, the Comoros Islands and Egypt. Dr. Abdul Meguid is due to be sworn in for the new term at the pan-Arab body's ministerial meeting set for March.

Beirut ready to send troops to south

CAIRO (AFP) — Lebanon is prepared to deploy 25,000 soldiers in the south of the country if Israel withdraws from an occupied border zone, the Lebanese ambassador here said Tuesday. "Lebanon is seriously considering sending 25,000 troops to assure security in the south as soon as Israel withdraws its troops," Hisham Damashqia told journalists after meeting Arab League chief Esamat Abdul Meguid. "The Lebanese national resistance will continue against the Israeli forces as long as they occupy South Lebanon, but (Beirut) is ready to stop this resistance once the occupation is over," he said.

Meeting opens on refugees

GENEVA (AFP) — Around 50 countries and international organisations met here Tuesday to consider aid for more than 3.5 million Palestinian refugees as part of the Middle East peace process. The working group for refugees created in 1992 will meet until Thursday. It has until now aimed at improving the refugees' living conditions and collected more than \$90 million together with UNRWA, the relief agency for Palestinian refugees. The group is considering series of proposals ranging from reuniting families, professional training and job creation projects to infrastructure projects, childcare measures and public health.

Militants attack Aden movie house

ADEN (AFP) — Militants smashed the windows of a movie house showing a James Bond film and tore down a poster of a woman, its owner and police said Tuesday. Police have opened an investigation into Sunday's attack by a group of bearded men and were hunting for suspects in the southern Yemeni city, but assistant police chief Ahmad Al Muthana downplayed the attack. "The incident, which must not be exaggerated, is the work of fanatics," Colonel Muthana told AFP.

Kohl letter bomb explodes in transit

BONN (R) — A letter bomb addressed to Chancellor Helmut Kohl exploded in a post office in eastern Germany, the federal prosecutor's office said on Tuesday. The bomb, which had no stamp or return address, blew up a second time as explosives experts touched it on Monday, the prosecutor said in a statement. There were no injuries.

Egypt lauds Bhutto

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak praised on Tuesday the efforts by Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to curb terrorism after the November suicide bombing of Egypt's embassy in Islamabad. "Bhutto has faced seriously and firmly all matters linked with terrorism," Mr. Mubarak said at his first meeting with newly-elected deputies from his ruling National Democratic Party (NDP).

Parliament voices total support for policies

(Continued from page 1) national independence and establishing their independent state on their national soil, Mr. Sour said. He added that Jordan was still persevering in all arenas to serve the cause of Jerusalem, which he described as "the diamond of Islam and the essence of a just and lasting peace, the peace that can never be so except with having our Palestinian brethren regaining their legitimate rights and having Israel withdraw from Palestinian land and all occupied Arab lands in Lebanon and Syria."

He said the King raised the theme of public participation in decision-making and acted as a defender of human rights, dignity and freedom, adding that Jordan was looking forward to having political pluralism taking roots in other parts of the Arab World.

"In one part of this great Arab World, the tragedy of the brotherly Iraqi people arises in an unprecedented manner," said Mr. Sour, expressing support for the King in his pursuit to preserve the Iraqi people's unity and the integrity of Iraqi lands, and endeavours to end the "unjust siege imposed on this glorious people which is suffering the ugliest form of suffering, falling victim to hunger, sickness and a strangling feeling of isolation from its brethren."

"The Senate pledges to you, Your Majesty, that it will fight anti-democratic forces with their same sword and to end those phenomena which are alien to our society and the values of our nation in accordance with the Constitution and the law," said Mr. Lawzi.

Mr. Lawzi also stressed that the Jordanian judiciary should have its fair share of care and support to preserve its independence and safeguard citizens' rights.

Lower House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Sour reviewed in the House's reply to the Speech from the Throne Jordan's achievements under the leadership of King Hussein, as well as His Majesty's stands on Arab causes.

Jordan, he said, was in the forefront in all battles of the Arab Nation, offering an example to others in self-denial and sacrifices, always sincere to the principles of the Great Arab Revolt launched by the King's great grandfather Sharif Hussein Ben Ali.

Jordan offered Palestine all it could and willingly received shocks and tragedies as a result, and it is still sincerely supporting the Palestinian people to enable them to regain their full rights, including their right to have

democracy as a source of pride and a way of life for Jordan, pledging to promote it and stop any power impeding it.

"Democracy is a source of our pride and a way of our life and we will persevere to deepen it and make it more

Official says expulsion of Iranian is final

(Continued from page 1)

two foreign ministers was witnessed by the Tunisian foreign minister.

But despite the assurances, Jordan, which is closely monitoring the quick developments and changes in the region generally, feels that the situation requires decisive and quick steps to curtail any attempt at rocking the stability of the Kingdom.

Jordan, the only Arab country other than Egypt and

the Palestinians that has signed a peace deal with Israel and a firm supporter of a solution in Iraq that would alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people, realises that the regional odds in such circumstances make it necessary for Amman to be very firm in sending the right message to any country that may feel that Jordan can be weakened," the source explained.

He said democracy was a source of pride and a way of life for Jordan, pledging to promote it and stop any power impeding it.

"Democracy is a source of our pride and a way of our life and we will persevere to deepen it and make it more

Peres urges Assad to move towards peace

(Continued from page 1)

for a new impetus in the peace process following the telephone conversation between Presidents Clinton and Assad and in the light of new ideas put forward in Washington by the Israeli prime minister."

Mr. Peres, who was making his first visit to the United States since the Nov. 4 assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin pledged in his address to Congress to keep Israeli partisan politics out of the peace process with Syria.

"To win peace is more important than to win elections," he said, referring to the October 1996 vote.

"We shall taste the life of a normal existence in our vicinity. This is now our major consideration," Mr. Peres said at a news conference with U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry, who he met after holding White House talks with Mr. Clinton on Monday.

Mr. Peres repeated the main peace theme of his two-day visit to Washington: A deal with Syria will pave the way for all but the most hardline of Arab states to normalise ties with Israel.

Mr. Clinton enthusiastically embraced Mr. Peres' vision of a new Middle East and pointedly praised him as "one of the architects of Israel's defence."

"The key to a lasting settlement in the Middle East is achieving peace between Israel and Syria and Israel and Lebanon. Today, Prime Minister Peres and I agreed to redouble our efforts to achieve these goals," Mr. Clinton said Monday.

The Israeli prime minister frequently referred to Mr. Rabin in his 30-minute address and said that while

practical negotiations," the president said.

The United States, Mr. Clinton said, "is heartened that Shimon Peres will carry on, and together we will work to fulfil Yitzhak Rabin's legacy."

In his address to Congress, Mr. Peres recalled the words of President Johnson when he told Congress after the death of John F. Kennedy: "All I have I would have given gladly not to be here today."

The prime minister told Congress that "I stand before you with one overriding commitment: To yield to no threat, to stop at no obstacle in negotiating the hurdles ahead in seeking security for our people, peace for our land, tranquillity for our region."

House and Senate members gave Mr. Peres an unusually long standing ovation and continued applauding as he made his way out of the chamber.

"I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, for your support and, first and foremost, your moral support," he said, adding that "let me assure you that never shall we ask your sons and daughters to fight instead of us."

Not mentioned was whether U.S. forces might eventually serve as peacekeepers on the border between Israel and Syria, a prospect many in Congress oppose.

Mr. Peres noted that as he spoke, Israeli troops were withdrawing from Palestinian towns on the West Bank "never to return as occupier. We don't want to occupy anybody."

Legal sources said the courts are likely to uphold

Palestinian flag in Nablus

(Continued from page 1)

from buses which carried them from self-ruled Jericho. Israel has accelerated the handover under which parts of the West Bank will be transferred to the PLO. Nablus was the third of six towns after Jenin and Tulkarm to switch hands.

Palestinian officials face a daunting task keeping order in the city. They worry about the large number of guns in the hands of the public and a violent contingent of activists from the Fatah faction.

"We are living in a state of security chaos. There are a lot of weapons. And we reiterate that the Palestinian Authority will not allow anyone to threaten the sovereignty of law and the safety and the security of its citizens," said Tayeb Abdul Rahim, secretary-general of the PNA.

About 200 Fatah members were paid during the eight-year uprising against the occupation to rule by the gun. Despite the peace deal, these youngsters ignored PNA orders to lay down their guns.

A West Bank commercial centre, Nablus fears that despite self-rule, Israel will suffocate their business by sealing off Nablus in the same way self-ruled Gaza has been closed most of the past two years.

There was no sign Tuesday of Jewish settlers opposed to Palestinian authority.

On Monday Israeli police arrested a group of settlers who tried to reach Joseph's Tomb in Nablus in defiance of an Israeli army order closing the town to Israelis. Tuesday, a first joint Israeli-Palestinian patrol policed Joseph's Tomb, a holy site revered by the settlers.

But in Hebron in the south of the West Bank Palestinians threw two grenades Tuesday at an Israeli army patrol. No one was hurt but police sealed off the town and arrested at least eight Palestinians, Palestinian sources said.

Israeli officials cited "security reasons" for the early pullout from Nablus. Israeli media reports said the army decided to move quickly after receiving warnings that Palestinian hardliners planned to attack Israelis ahead of their scheduled pull-out on Wednesday.

But the commander of Israeli forces in the West Bank, General Gaby Ophir, said: "Everything went quietly, which shows that we were right to move up our withdrawal."

Mr. Abdul Rahim pledged to act against lawlessness and armed bands in Nablus.

"The Palestinian Authority will be the guardian of your security," he said, blaming the years of Israeli occupation for "security deficiencies" and the presence of large numbers of unregistered guns in the town.

Robust rules of engagement would allow the 60,000-strong force, including 20,000 U.S. soldiers, to deal "right then and there" with any perceived threat from snipers or so-called "rogue elements" opposed to the peace deal, he said.

"I can assure you that if we spot a sniper he will be taken out immediately. He will be neutralised," Adm. Smith said.

Asked whether that meant "kill," he said minimum necessary force would be applied but added: "I don't intend to fire over their heads and we don't intend to shoot

After all night celebrations featuring fireworks, dancing and nearly constant shooting into the air, Palestinian boys and girl scouts paraded up and down Nablus Tuesday carrying Palestinian flags.

Mr. Peres repeated the main peace theme of his two-day visit to Washington: A deal with Syria will pave the way for all but the most hardline of Arab states to normalise ties with Israel.

Opinion polls showed voters no longer wanted Mr. Papandreu, who swept to power as Greece's first socialist prime minister in 1981, to remain their leader.

Almost 79 per cent of PASOK voters asked by the independent Alko company said Mr. Papandreu should quit, according to the Dec. 12 poll.

Mubarak says no poll probe

(Continued from page 1)

the vote results and back the parliament's sole right to judge its own elections.

By Egyptian law, parliament refers any appeals in vote results to the supreme court for an opinion but in the end decides for itself whether to uphold or cancel them.

The court already ruled to cancel results for 112 seats, but the Interior Ministry appealed the judgement. A higher court is to judge the status of the seats on Monday.

Opposition and rights groups have called for a new vote, saying the ruling party won its landslide of 417 seats using "massive and blatant fraud."

Legal sources said the courts are likely to uphold

Official explains Jordanian approach to Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

apparently was his second in three months as he had travelled to Baghdad with a similar message to President Saddam in late June, just before the King paid a visit to France to meet with the new President Jacques Chirac.

The Jordanian initiative to provide the Iraqi opposition with a forum to open a dialogue among themselves and agree on a formula for change in Iraq has been prompted not only by President Saddam's refusal to do whatever necessary to end his people's suffering but also by Jordan's concern to prevent any bloodshed that may result from the already existing disunity among rival factions in Iraq (Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds), the official explained.

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Since each district has two seats in the 454-seat assembly, the appeals put 56 seats in question. The court is to rule on the appeals next Tuesday.

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Former cigarette ad model sues tobacco companies

MIAMI (R) — A former actor who said he modelled for Winston cigarette ads of the 1960s and 1970s filed suit Monday against three tobacco companies, claiming they failed to warn him about the dangers of cigarettes.

Alan Levine, 55, who used the stage name Alan Landers, filed a civil lawsuit in West Palm Beach, Florida, alleging the tobacco companies violated Florida product liability laws by failing to label cigarettes as dangerous. Mr. Levine had had two operations for lung cancer since 1988.

The suit names as defendants the companies whose products Mr. Levine used since he started smoking at age nine — American Tobacco Co., makers of Lucky Strike, Brown Williamson Tobacco Corp., makers of Kool and R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., manufacturer of Winston.

Mr. Levine's lawyer, Woody Wilner, said the actor's case is one of more than 100 individual lawsuits filed in various Florida jurisdictions challenging tobacco companies for alleged violations of Florida product liability laws.

Mr. Wilner said the lawsuit

claims the tobacco companies deliberately misrepresented their cigarettes "by telling people they were okay when they weren't."

"This is a clear violation of the product liability laws," he said. "You have got to put a valid and correct warning on your product. You can't fudge it, you can't fib about it."

In modelling for R.J. Reynolds' Winston cigarettes, Mr. Levine said he

appeared in print and billboard ads picturing healthy, family-oriented activities. He said he was asked to smoke the cigarettes to make them look a certain way for the cameras.

"I smoked all day long. I would have to smoke it and get the ash perfect. It had to look very appealing," he said.

Mr. Levine, a resident of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, said his vocal cords were pa-

ralysed and his ability to breathe impaired during the second surgery and although the vocal cords have been repaired, he has been unable to resume his career.

Peggy Carter, spokeswoman for R.J. Reynolds, said the company could not comment on the case because it had not seen the lawsuit. She also said the company could not verify that Mr. Levine had been employed as a model for Winston.

As to Mr. Levine's allegation that he was not aware of the risks of smoking, she said, "I find it a little bit difficult to understand how someone can make that claim" in light of package

warnings that began in the 1960s.

A spokesman for Brown Williamson, which bought American Tobacco last year, was not immediately available for comment.

Mr. Wilner said he decided to use Florida's strong product liability laws to challenge the giant tobacco companies because people "are not told the truth about smoking."

"You don't have people walking around drinking rat poison, because it is labelled poison," he said. "We have a vague idea about (the dangers of smoking), but the tobacco industry keeps us off balance by denying it."

SPA: China tops software piracy list

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Pirated software in China represents some 98 per cent of the country's market, but illegal copying in Japan and other wealthy countries is more costly to manufacturers, a trade group said Monday.

The Software Publishers Association (SPA's) annual report on global software piracy said China was the world's worst violator in percentage terms, costing legitimate software makers some \$188 million in 1994.

But in Japan, the piracy rate was 56 per cent and law enforcement practices cost software publishers more than \$1.3 billion, the single largest country loss, the report said.

In the United States, pirated software was estimated to be 25 per cent of the market in 1994, down from 40 per cent a year earlier. Losses were estimated at \$1.04 billion.

India, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand as well as Russia and Eastern Europe were also cited for a high percentage of illegally copied software.

Overall, piracy was estimated to deprive companies of some \$8 billion in revenues, almost as much as the \$8.5 billion in legitimate global sales of business software.

"High national incomes, or high average personal incomes, do not by themselves predict low piracy rates," the report said. "Nations such as Italy, Japan and France have high national incomes but their low levels of enforcement encourage relatively high piracy rates."

In France, a 62 per cent piracy rate led to \$482 billion in losses and Italy had a 68 per cent piracy rate worth \$263 million, according to the report.

Financial Jordan Times
Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets	
Currency	New York Close
Sterling Pound	1.5336
Deutsche Mark	1.4444
Swiss Franc	1.1697
French Franc	4.9865
Japanese Yen	101.15
European Currency Unit	1.2713

* USD per SGD

** Europa Opening @ 800 a.m. GMT

Exchanging Interest Rates Date: 12/12/1995

1 MTH		3 MTHS		6 MTHS		12 MTHS	
U.S. Dollar	5.62	5.50	5.31	5.18			
Sterling Pound	6.37	6.25	6.12	6.17			
Deutsche Mark	3.93	3.68	3.62	3.56			
Swiss Franc	2.18	1.93	1.81	1.75			
French Franc	5.25	5.25	5.12	5.00			
Japanese Yen	0.15	0.25	0.25	0.25			
European Currency Unit	5.40	5.25	5.21	5.18			

Interest rates for currencies consulting U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Previous Metals Date: 12/12/1995

Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm ²	Metals	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	368.50	7.70	Silver	5.73	0.100

24 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 12/12/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0845	1.0902
Deutsche Mark	0.4902	0.4927
Swiss Franc	0.6055	0.6085
French Franc	0.1421	0.1428
Japanese Yen*	0.6976	0.7011
Dutch Guilder	0.4375	0.4400
Swedish Krona	0.0000	0.0000
Italian Lira*	0.0443	0.0445
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

* For 100

Other Currencies Date: 12/12/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
Lebanese Lira*	0.043715	0.044430
Saudi Riyal	0.1870	0.1898
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3070	2.3670
Qatar Riyal	0.1932	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2100	0.2200
Oman Riyal	1.0330	1.0410
UAE Dirham	0.1922	0.1933
Greek Drachma*	0.2645	0.3125
Cypriot Pound	1.5100	1.5870

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One U.S. dollar 1.3772/82
1.4482/92
1.6212/22
1.1744/54
29.74/78
4.9916/66
1598.49/9.9
101.70/80
6.7080/80
6.3910/60
5.6094/94
1.4145/55
0.7402/07
7.7340/50
One sterling \$1.5320/30
Gold (ounce) \$388.90/389.40

Canadian dollar

Deutschmarks

Dutch guilders

Swiss francs

Belgian francs

French francs

Italian lire

Japanese yen

Swedish kronas

Norwegian kronas

Danish kronas

Singapore dollars

Australian dollars

Hong Kong dollars

Charlton's veterans ready for one more battle

LIVERPOOL (AFP) — Jack Charlton has led Ireland to three major tournaments but each time only after a last-ditch scramble.

He could not have left it later on Wednesday when his ageing team takes on Holland in a play-off for the 1996 European Championship finals.

The result of his 93rd international match in charge of Ireland will decide if Charlton extends his tenure as the Republic's manager to a 10th year.

Charlton's ageing team, who lost three of their last four games in the qualifying group, have only been given one more chance because Northern Ireland beat second-place challengers Austria last month.

"Maybe it is time for a change, but if we can reach the finals I'll be there and, who knows, we could go from strength to strength," said the 60-year-old Charlton.

"We have had a few 'last chances' already. Now we've got to make this one count."

Ireland's last-ditch tactics

won places in the 1988 European championship and the 1990 and 1994 World Cups.

The Dutch have beaten us twice in competitive internationals during the last seven years and we've only beaten them once in a friendly during that time.

"But I don't think they are the great side that they used to be, although still very good. There is a lot of talent there which will test us."

Charlton must gamble on midfielder John Sheridan.

The Ireland boss watched Sheridan's come-back from injury as a substitute for Sheffield Wednesday at Manchester United on Saturday, and must now decide whether that is sufficient to see him through a clash of this intensity — just six weeks after a knee operation.

Niall Quinn, the focus of Ireland's traditional high-ball attack, is suspended — the first game he has missed since a knee injury ruled him out in the 1994 World Cup.

Midfielders Roy Keane and Steve Staunton are also missing. Staunton has a pulled hamstring while Keane has not sufficiently recovered from hernia surgery. But Ireland are used to his absence as he played only three of the 10 qualifying games.

Tony Cascarino, international football's most-capped substitute, is out to prove Charlton wrong.

The former Millwall, Aston Villa, Celtic and Chelsea striker — now with fallen French giants Marseille — is in for Quinn.

"I've always known he only regarded me as a maximum 60 minutes player at international level and, in times gone by, he was maybe right," Cascarino said.

EUROPEAN SOCCER

"But since I've played in France I feel fitter, faster and more confident with my touch."

Charlton admitted: "Tony has been showing us in training just how much he has improved since going to France."

"His touch is certainly better than it was and he's had plenty of experience with us, coming on as sub for Niall more often than not."

Casciarino, has earned 30 of his 58 caps as a substitute and scored 12 goals.

His last start was in a somewhat embarrassing home de-

feat by the Czech Republic just before Ireland flew of the World Cup in America last summer.

But he scored a brilliant goal just two months earlier in a superb win over Germany in Hanover.

Irish fans will outnumber the 11,000 Dutch supporters nearly 3-1 at Liverpool and Dutch striker Dennis Bergkamp, who plays for London side Arsenal, admits: "It is certainly an away match for

them they met the Irish, in the last 16 of the 1994 World Cup.

His goal from a Marc Overmars cross sparked a 2-0 win, confirmed when Wim Jonk's tame 40-yard shot went through Packie Bonner's hands and effectively ended the veteran Celtic goalkeeper's international career.

Past results:

1980: Ireland 2 Holland 1 (World Cup qualifier, Dublin).

1981: Holland 2 Ireland 1 (World Cup qualifier, Rotterdam).

1982: Holland 2 Ireland 1 (World Cup qualifier, Rotterdam).

1983: Ireland 2 Holland 3 (European Championship qualifier, Dublin).

1988: Holland 1 Ireland 0 (European Championship final, Geisenkirchen).

1990: Ireland 1 Holland 1 (World Cup final, Palermo).

1994: Holland 0 Ireland 1 (Friendly, Tilburg). Holland 2 Ireland 0 (World Cup final, Orlando).

Premier League's 13th week kicks off today

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The upcoming week's most awaited match is undoubtedly the Ramtha-Hussein clash scheduled for Friday at Irbid's Hassan Stadium.

Al Ramtha strengthened their lead atop the standings last week after an important 2-0 win over Kufrsoum.

They tightened their grip at the time Al Hussein and Al Wihdat were held to a disappointing 2-2 draw against Al Jazireh and Al Jali.

While Al Wihdat's fans were understandably enraged with the result over the 11th placed team, it seemed the players were not to be totally blamed for squandering a 2-0 lead.

They must have been tired after arriving from the Arab Club Championships in Riyadh. The team's morale was also surely at a low point after their 6-1 loss to host Al Nasr in their last match which Al Wihdat completed with eight players.

They later learned of the suspension of captain Yousef Ammoura for a year in Arab championships.

Al Wihdat will have to put their house in order

before facing Al Jazireh Friday if they want to keep their chances for retaining the title.

Meanwhile,

former

champions

Al Faisali

moved up one place to third after a 2-1 win over Al Baqaa.

They next play

Sahab Thursday.

Similarly, Al Qadissieh's

2-1 win over Al Russeifa

was a crucial one that

moved them two places up to fourth. They next play ninth placed Al Ahli hoping to further improve their standing to come.

Al Ahli remained in the same position after only

managing a 1-1 draw with Sahab, while Kufrsoum

dropped three places to

sixth last week and will play

last-placed Al Russeifa

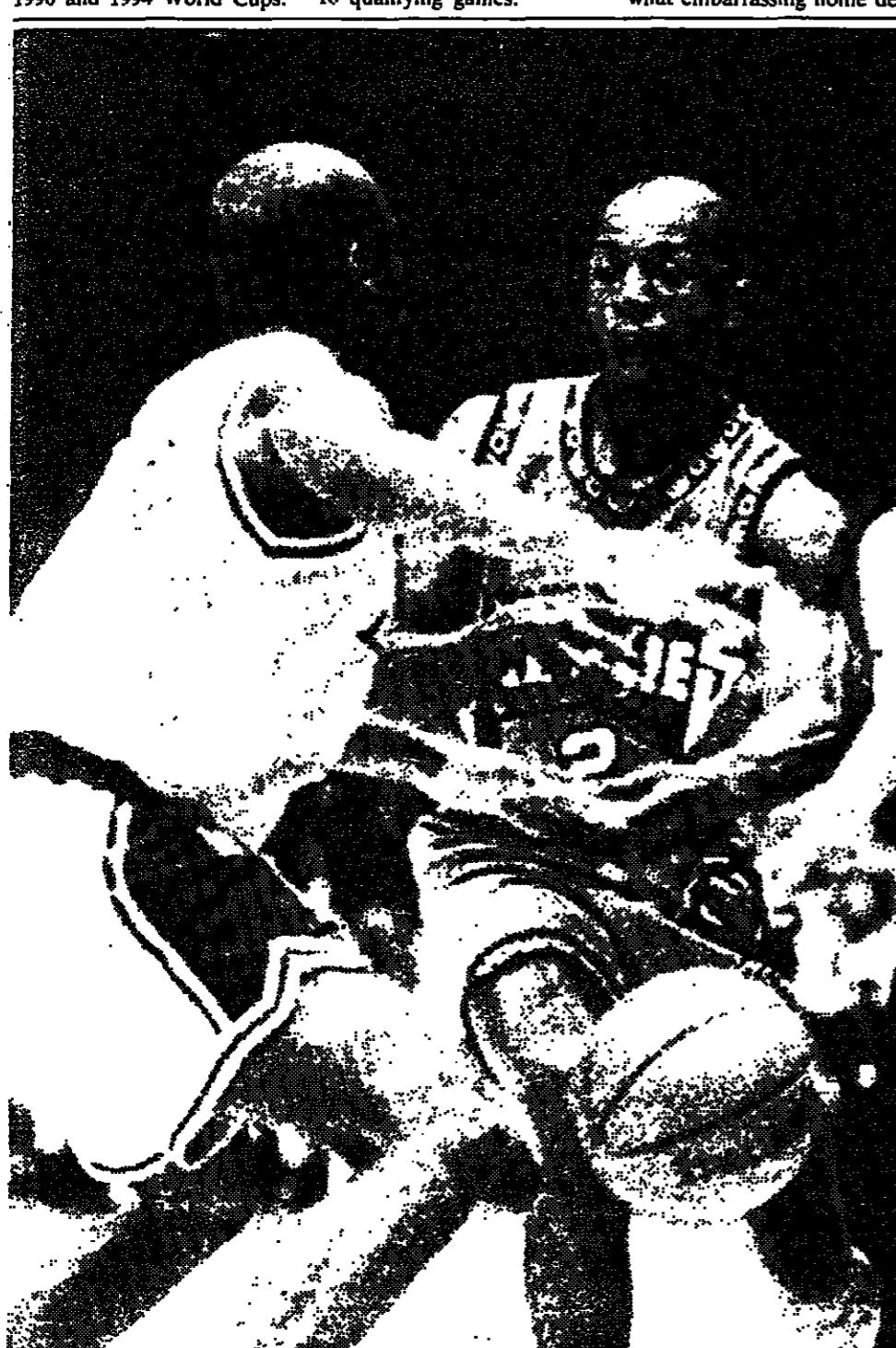
Thursday.

Schedule of 13th week

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Ramtha	12	8	3	1	18	4	27
Hussein	12	6	5	1	25	8	23
Faisali	12	6	4	2	17	12	22
Qadissieh	12	6	3	3	17	12	21
Wihdat	12	5	5	2	19	12	20
Kufrsoum	12	5	5	2	14	9	20
Jazireh	12	4	4	4	19	18	16
Ahli	12	3	6	3	16	11	15
Baqaa	12	3	3	6	19	21	12
Sahab	12	1	8	3	10	15	11
Jali	12	1	2	9	11	28	5
Russeifa	12	-	-	-	12	9	47

* All matches are at 2:30 p.m.

STANDING AFTER 12TH WEEK



The Vancouver Grizzlies Greg Anthony (right) reacts after the Los Angeles Lakers Nick Van Exel strips the ball from him (Reuters photo)

Jazz, Nuggets post wins

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — Karl "Mailman" Malone delivered another strong game on Monday by scoring 24 points to help the Utah Jazz beat the short-handed Charlotte Hornets 110-100.

Malone, who was coming off a 51-point, 14-rebound performance against Golden State on Saturday, helped the Jazz (14-7) move within one game of the NBA champion Houston Rockets in the Midwest Division.

Charlotte (9-12), who were already without leading scorer Larry Johnson, lost point guard Khalid Reeves to a sprained left ankle in the second quarter.

Utah took control of the game with a 12-2 burst over the final 3:20 of the first half, keyed by three-pointers by John Stockton and Chris Morris. The Spur gave the Jazz a 53-46 halftime advantage.

"I think the run at the end

of the first half really gave them a lot of momentum," said Charlotte's Kendall Gill.

"At that point we were playing with them neck and neck without our key player in the game and I thought everyone was feeling pretty well about themselves."

Morris had 22 points and Stockton added 18 points and 15 assists, the 11th time in 12 games he's hit double figures in assists.

Glen Rice scored 19 points and Gill added 18 for Charlotte.

In Philadelphia, Mahmoud Abdul Rauf had 22 points and 10 assists and Bryant Stinch added 21 points to lead the Denver Nuggets to their fifth win in a row, a 104-91 victory over the struggling Philadelphia 76ers.

Denver, winners of eight of their last nine games, reached the .500 mark after a miserable 1-8 start.

Rookie Jerry Stackhouse scored 20 points and Clarence Weatherspoon added 18 for the 76ers, who have lost 14 of their last 15 games.

The 76ers (3-16) were playing without newly-acquired Derrick Coleman, who is expected to miss 7-10 days with a sprained ankle.

Nuggets rookie forward Antonio McDyess went down with a sprained left ankle early in the second quarter and did not return. McDyess, the second player taken in the NBA draft, was taken to a hospital for X-rays, which revealed bone chips.

"A lot of guys stepped up," Nuggets coach Bernie Bickerstaff said. "The big guy (Mutombo) was in foul trouble, McDyess was playing good and he went down. It was our small guys, the Ellis's and the Sittis. They did a good job on the boards."

Norwegian agent banned for life

PARIS (AFP) — Norwegian agent Rune Hauge, whose 440,000-pound backhander to George Graham cost the Arsenal manager his job, was banned for life by FIFA here on Monday.

The international football federation warned players, clubs and national football associations they would face punishment if they had any future involvement with him.

Hauge's lawyer, Dag Steinfeldt, told the Norwegian agency NTB that FIFA had no authority to suspend an agent as punishment and said Hauge would be taking legal action.

Graham was sacked in February for accepting a handout from Hauge, who gave the former Arsenal boss his cash following the transfers to the London club of Norwegian Pal Lydersen and Danish midfielder John Jensen.

The revelations cost Graham — who subsequently repaid the cash to the Highbury club — his job and also brought a 12-month ban from the English Football Association.

Hauge's involvement brought his suspension from FIFA's list of licensed players' agents and clubs were warned not to use him.

But Hauge ignored the ban, using an intermediary to become involved in the \$40,000 pound transfer of Swedish international defender Pontus Kamark to Leicester from Gothenburg.

Hauge also advised fellow Norwegian Lars Bohinen over his controversial switch from Nottingham Forest to Blackburn for a mere 750,000 pounds, a transfer negotiated through Danish intermediary Frank Mathieson.

"It has become evident that during his suspension he has continued to operate, even if through an intermediary, in the transfer of players despite his suspension," FIFA spokesman Keith Cooper said.

"When we introduced the system of licensed agents on Jan. 1 we knew it would be difficult to impose but were determined to do so," he added. "FIFA hopes people will work with the system, rather than against it."

"We will not take any action against players or clubs who have used Hauge during the period of his suspension but we are making it clear that in future any individuals or clubs who avoid our decisions will face the consequences themselves."

Cooper refused to be drawn on what any potential punishment might be but he made it clear that pressure would be put on the FA and other national federations to ensure clubs and players under their jurisdiction took heed of the decision.

"We call on all associations to support our policy and for them to call on their clubs to adhere more strictly to our system and ensure transfers are conducted only by recognised individual agents."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
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"THE HAND"

Both vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH

♦ A ♦ 6

♦ J ♦ 4

♦ A ♦ 5 ♦ 2

♦ A ♦ 7 ♦ 6 ♦

WEST

♦ A ♦ 8 ♦ 2

♦ A ♦ 10 ♦ 3

♦ A ♦ 10 ♦ 4 ♦ 3

♦ A ♦ 10 ♦ 3

EAST

♦ 9 ♦ 2

♦ 9 ♦ 1

♦ A ♦ 8 ♦ 1

♦ A ♦ 9 ♦ 4

World Cup qualifying draw Jordan to play UAE, Bahrain in 1st round

PARIS (AFP) — FIFA, world football's governing body, announced the World Cup draw here on Tuesday for the 1998 World Cup finals in France.

France (hosts), Brazil (holders) qualify automatically. 30 other qualifiers.

ASIA (36 entries, 3 or 4 qualifiers)

1st round

Group 1: Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Chinese Taipei

Group 2: Iran, Syria, Maldives, Kyrgyzstan

Group 3: United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Jordan

Group 4: Japan, Oman, Nepal, Macao

Group 5: Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Yemen, Cambodia

Group 6: South Korea, Thailand, Hong Kong

Group 7: Kuwait, Lebanon, Singapore

Group 8: China, Turkmenistan, Vietnam, Tajikistan

Group 9: Iraq, Kazakhstan, Pakistan

Group 10: Qatar, India, Sri Lanka, Philippines

10 group winners qualify for second round.

2nd round: Two groups of 5. The first two from each group (4 teams) contest Asian finals. The first three qualify directly for France, and the winner of a play-off between the fourth Asian team and the Oceania Zone winner will also qualify.

SOUTH AFRICA (9 entries, 4 qualifiers)

Round-robin. First four qualify.

Fixtures 1996.

April 24: Argentina v. Bolivia, Venezuela v. Uruguay, Colombia v. Paraguay, Ecuador v. Peru

June 2: Ecuador v. Argentina, Uruguay v. Paraguay, Venezuela v. while, Peru v. Colombia

July 7: Peru v. Argentina, Chile v. Ecuador, Colombia v. Uruguay, Bolivia v. Venezuela

Sept. 1: Argentina v. Paraguay, Colombia v. Chile, Ecuador v. Venezuela, Bolivia v. Peru

Sept. 9: Venezuela v. Argentina, Uruguay v. Bolivia, Ecuador v. Colombia, Paraguay v. Chile

Nov. 10: Chile v. Uruguay, Bolivia v. Colombia, Paraguay v. Ecuador, Peru v. Venezuela

Dec. 15: Argentina v. Chile, Uruguay v. Peru, Venezuela v. Colombia, Bolivia v. Paraguay

1997

Jan. 12: Uruguay v. Argentina, Peru v. Chile, Venezuela v. Paraguay, Bolivia v. Ecuador

Feb. 12: Colombia v. Argentina, Ecuador v. Uruguay, Paraguay v. Peru, Bolivia v. Chile

April 2: Bolivia v. Argentina, Uruguay v. Venezuela, Paraguay v. Colombia, Peru v. Ecuador

April 30: Argentina v. Ecuador, Paraguay v. Uruguay, Chile v. Venezuela, Colombia v. Peru

June 8: Argentina v. Peru, Ecuador v. Chile, Uruguay v. Colombia, Venezuela v. Bolivia

July 6: Paraguay v. Argentina, Chile v. Colombia, Peru v. Bolivia, Venezuela v. Ecuador

July 20: Argentina v. Venezuela, Bolivia v. Uruguay, Colombia v. Ecuador, Chile v. Paraguay

Aug. 20: Uruguay v. Chile, Colombia v. Bolivia, Ecuador v. Paraguay, Venezuela v. Peru

Sept. 10: Chile v. Argentina



The logo of the 1998 soccer World Cup scheduled for June 16-July 12 in France (AFP photo)

na, Peru v. Uruguay, Colombia v. Venezuela, Paraguay v. Bolivia.

Oct. 12: Chile v. Peru, Paraguay v. Venezuela, Ecuador v. Bolivia

Nov. 16: Argentina v. Colombia, Uruguay v. Ecuador, Peru v. Paraguay, Chile v. Bolivia

AFRICA (36 entries, 5 qualifiers)

1st round knock-out; Home and away

Sudan v. Zambia

Namibia v. Mozambique

Tanzania v. Ghana

Swaziland v. Gabon

Uganda v. Angola

Mauritius v. Zaire

Malawi v. South Africa

Madagascar v. Zimbabwe

Guinea Bissau v. Guinea

Rwanda v. Tunisia

Congo v. Ivory Coast

Kenya v. Algeria

Burundi v. Sierra Leone

Mauritania v. Burkina Faso

Togo v. Senegal

Gambia v. Liberia

First of each nine groups and best second-placed team (10 countries) qualify directly. Eight other group runners-up are drawn into four play-off matches (home and away) and the four winners also qualify for France.

OCEANIA

(10 entries, 1 possible qualifier)

1st round: Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Tahiti — bye

Melanesia: Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu

Polynesia: Cook Islands, Tonga, Western Samoa

Melanesia group winner qualifies for second round as well as winner of play-off between Melanesian group runner-up and Polynesia group winner.

2nd round

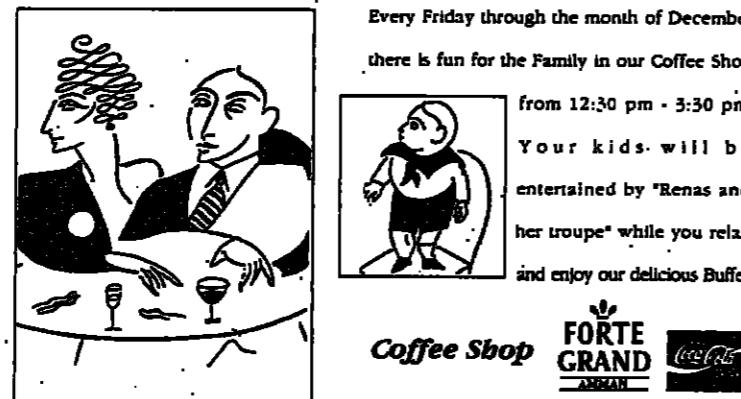
Group 1: Australia, Tahiti, winner of play-off between Melanesian group runner-up

First three qualify for France.

Jordan Times
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S. Arabia denies border skirmish

SANAA (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia has boosted its military presence along its disputed border with Yemen after five people were wounded in an armed clash last week, officials said here Tuesday.

But Saudi Arabia denied the report, saying it "was groundless, inexact and lacking credibility."

Officials here said Yemeni border guards, who are tribesmen, were involved in the clash on the borders of Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Oman last Thursday after Saudi troops had infiltrated Yemeni territory several times.

"The incident took place after the Saudi army staged several shows of force along the border and tried to change the demographic structure of the disputed border regions," an official here said, asking not to be named.

The Saudi army has since sent reinforcements to the border along with heavy weapons and helicopters, Yemeni officials told AFP.

Officials here added that Yemen's Parliament Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar was to travel later Tuesday to Saudi Arabia for talks with Saudi Defence Minister Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz, who handles affairs with Yemen.

Sheikh Ahmar is to chair a meeting of a joint committee which oversees border negotiations under an accord concluded in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in February aimed at resolving bilateral differences.

In issuing the denial, the SPA said Saudi Arabia was concerned about cooperation with Yemen on the basis of the Mecca accord.

A joint commission tasked with demarcating the border is due to meet on Dec. 20 in Riyadh.

The sources said the latest clashes took place near Al Kharakhan, an area which

Yemeni sources said belonged to Yemen but was seized by Saudi Arabia in earlier confrontations.

The sources also said Saudi Arabia had been building up its military presence in Al Kharakhan for the past three days.

The Saudi Arabian news agency SPA, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation in London, quoted a well-informed source at the Defence Ministry as describing the report of clashes as "absolutely untrue."

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is eager to cooperate with the brothers in the Republic of Yemen, proceeding from the memorandum of mutual understanding signed by the two countries during the month of Ramadan last year," the source was quoted as saying.

Saudi Arabia, which occupies about 80 per cent of the Arabian peninsula, has been moving this year to settle its border disputes and reached agreements with both Oman and Yemen.

Parts of the long Yemeni-Saudi border have oil and gas deposits, Western oil industry experts say.

Links between the two neighbours have been tense since Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait when Yemen, then a member of the U.N. Security Council, voted against sanctions on the Gulf war.

Relations suffered another blow during Yemen's two-month civil war in 1994 when some Yemeni officials in the capital Sanaa in the north accused Saudi Arabia of backing failed southern secessionist bid.

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh visited Saudi Arabia in June for reconciliation talks with King Fahd aimed at restoring once-close ties. Before the Gulf crisis, Saudi Arabia was Yemen's main financial backer.

Briton's statements recall tour guide's last moments

LARNACA (AFP) — The horrific details of Danish tour guide Louise Jensen's final moments were revealed in statements from three accused British soldiers read out in court here Tuesday.

Alan Ford, 27, Jeff Pernell, 23, and Justin Fowler, 27, deny charges of manslaughter, abduction, and conspiracy to rape Jensen, 23, in September last year.

"But they revealed the details of Jensen's killing in conflicting statements given to police and read to the court by Chief Inspector Charalambos Arigrou.

Fowler, who blamed his co-accused for the killing, admitted all three tried to rape Jensen after the terrified 23-year-old was violently stripped naked on a remote dirt road.

"She was sitting on the edge of the car crying and

wiping blood from her nose," wrote Fowler.

He then described how all three tried to rape her, and that Ford then hit her with a spade before dragging her away, helped by Pernell.

He claimed they returned five minutes later saying they had buried the tour guide, whose body was found in a shallow grave two days later.

Fowler admitted Jensen was not knocked from a motor bike earlier that evening, beaten by her boyfriend before being bundled into their car.

In the guilt-ridden confession Fowler began: "Lord please forgive me for not giving the full truth sooner.

This event is always on my mind and it's stopping me from sleeping and acting normally."

(Continued on page 7)

Clinton is upbeat over Syrian-Israeli peace track

WASHINGTON (USA) — Detecting "new atmosphere" in the Middle East, President Bill Clinton will send Secretary of State Warren Christopher to Syria next week to seize a fresh opportunity for a comprehensive settlement.

Mr. Clinton reviewed with Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres the latest developments in the region on Monday, expressing the sombre belief that the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin may lend new impetus to the quest for a settlement because it demonstrates so starkly Israel's commitment to peace.

"Very frankly, sad as it is to say, I think the Syrian leader and the Syrian people now see the exceptional price that former Prime Minister Rabin and Prime Minister Peres have been willing to pay in their search for peace," the president said. "I think that is the fundamental new reality here. I don't think any of the details matter nearly as much as that fundamental new reality."

Mr. Clinton said Syrian President Hafez Al Assad had agreed to the Christopher mission, which will seek ways to translate a new interest in peace into practical negotiating mechanisms.

At a news conference held jointly with Mr. Peres, Mr. Clinton said he will convey to the Syrian leader "the essential elements of my meeting" with Mr. Peres, and he paraphrased Mr. Peres as saying the "atmosphere is better than it was before."

A senior administration official said Mr. Clinton

thinks the Rabin assassination "has focused attention" by both sides in the Mideast conflict and has "heightened the sense on what is at stake. What we are now hearing from the Syrian side," he said, "is that they are determined to move ahead quickly."

The assassination, he added, "has reminded everyone of the stakes and made it very clear that people like Prime Minister Rabin were prepared to commit themselves to an effort even if it meant exposing themselves personally, and I think that had an effect."

He said that "sense of urgency" had been lacking in previous discussions. "The essence of what we heard today," he explained, "is that both sides are serious. The challenge that we face now is to see whether that general commitment becomes translatable into specific decisions."

In Damascus, Mr. Christopher will be seeking "a better way to engage in very serious negotiations. We have to find a way to move from where we are to where we need to be."

Until now, the official conceded, the process has not come up with a sustained "mechanism that would be a serious way of solving problems. We had discussions," he explained, but had not found a "more intensive, factual way to identifying problems, of identifying points of convergence," of recognising areas where "common language" could be applied to

start solution, even in areas of disagreement.

The official said Washington is hearing from both sides "a willingness to engage with greater energy. We, too, are prepared to engage with greater energy. What we feel now is (that) not only is there a desire for peace but a different kind of intensity that each side seems to be prepared to offer."

Calling it "too soon" to draw final judgments on these promising signs, he said Mr. Christopher "will have to get out there (in Damascus) and see how the general can be moved to the specific."

The official, citing Mr. Peres' well-known reputation as a strategic thinker, told reporters the prime minister had conveyed to Mr. Clinton — and thus to Mr. Assad — an enlarged view of how to approach peace with Syria and Lebanon, placing less stress on individual issues and more on creating a mechanism to resolve differences. He said that while it would be inappropriate to get into details, Mr. Peres took "a very panoramic view of the problem" and how to get about dealing with it.

On the Israeli side, the official detected "an effort now to see the totality of all the issues... in a way that focuses on all the issues," not just hot-button topics like the Golan Heights. He said Mr. Peres presented a "broadened and enlarged approach to how to think about the process."

The official said Mr. Clinton and Mr. Peres, in a pri-

vate meeting, focused on the Syrian track of the peace process, while during a plenary luncheon session the leaders and their sides discussed "where Israel is in relation to her Arab neighbours." By pre-arrangement, Mr. Clinton left that session to draw a telephone call from Mr. Assad in the residence of the White House.

"They spoke for about 10 or 12 minutes," the official said, "and President Assad welcomed the president's assessment of what he had heard from Prime Minister Peres, agreed that Secretary Christopher should visit Damascus, and that he would join the president and the prime minister in recommitting himself to moving forward to reach an agreement on the Syrian track."

Although news accounts have speculated that a force of U.S. troops on the Golan Heights would monitor any agreement between Tel Aviv and Damascus, Mr. Clinton told a questioner neither side has formally made such request. "We have not been asked," he said.

Asked if an agreement with Syria would lead to a formal defence treaty between Washington and Tel Aviv, Mr. Clinton replied that the "security of Israel is terribly important to the United States. We have made an explicit policy commitment... to maintain the qualitative and technological edge that Israel needs to guarantee its security in an atmosphere that has been far more hostile

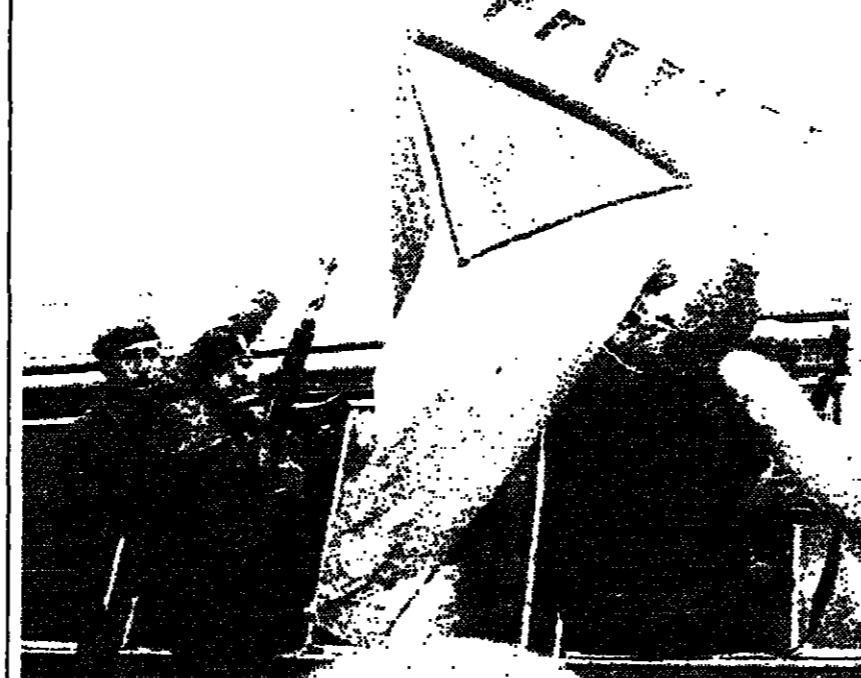
now to see the totality of all the issues... in a way that focuses on all the issues," not just hot-button topics like the Golan Heights. He said Mr. Peres presented a "broadened and enlarged approach to how to think about the process."

Mr. Clinton told a questioner he has no present plans to visit Palestine territory but said he "expects to go back to the Middle East at an appropriate time," perhaps connected with "another advance in the cause of peace."

He said he expects the Palestinian elections to go forward in a manner international observers will regard as legitimate.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees has since provided them with tinned food, their only source of sustenance.

The 180 Palestinians have a



ISRAEL-FREE NABLUS: Some of 1,200 Palestinians sweep in to take control of Nablus, the largest town in the West Bank, early Tuesday after the Israeli army withdrew from the town 24 hours ahead of schedule (see page one) (AFP photo)

Ancient Samaritans welcome arrival of Palestinian self-rule

NABLUS (AFP) — The

Rather than dreaming of the Holy City of Jerusalem, the Samaritans have for centuries held onto their "sacred mountain," Mount Gerizim, overlooking Nablus and its 130,000 Palestinian residents.

"We are not Jewish, we are authentic Hebrews," declares Mr. Altif, seated comfortably in the well-appointed living room of his modern house, dominated by a giant satellite dish out front.

Each Samaritan bears both

America and

the

Samaritan

and